



A qualitative analysis of irony as humor in Japanese conversation

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URL	http://hdl.handle.net/10097/55480

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日本語会話におけるユーモアとしてのアイロニーの質的分析

国際文化交流論先攻（言語コミュニケーション論講座）

B1KM1006 コートニ フィツジェラルド

1. 研究目的と先行研究

英語談話におけるアイロニーに関する先行研究は数多くあり、その研究によるとアイロニーは談話上で様々な役割を果たす：批評を弱めること（Dews et al, 1995; Boxer, 2002）、気楽な雰囲気を生み出すこと（Gibbs, 2000）、フェイスを保つこと（ポライトネスのストラテジー）（Jorgenson, 1996）。そして、最近の研究によるとアイロニーはからいによる（偽）マイナス評価や冷やかしを通して話し手や聞き手の絆を深める機能を持つと考えられる（Gibbs, 2000; Clift, 1999; Hirsch, 2011）。その異なる機能は進化したアイロニーの定義にも影響する：アイロニーというのは伝統的に単なる反語や、マイナスな評価を表すものとして知れているが、研究の結果、それはアイロニーの機能の一つだけにすぎないことが分かった。実はアイロニーというのは発話や言いたいことのギャップから生じ、その効果は肯定的なものから否定的なものまで異なるインパクトを持つ複雑な言語ツールだと考えられる。

それに対し、日本語研究ではアイロニーの機能は人為的なシナリオによってマイナスな評価との関係に限られている（筒井, 1989; Okamoto, 2002; 中村, 2011）。その上、アイロニーの定義が「皮肉」という否定的な単語に結びつくので、アイロニーのユーモラスの機能は観察されていない。アイロニーが会話にどのように日本語会話で用いられているかについての先行研究、及び日本語の会話におけるアイロニーを観察する研究は不十分だと考える。

2. 研究方法

本研究は以下のデータを収集した上で、アイロニー発話を分析した。収集したデータはテレビと自然会話からとったものである。テレビのデータはスクリプトに基づく会話のドラマ、スクリプトに基づくナレーションのバラエティー番組、そしてインタビューでの自然会話の3種類である。自然会話は、レストランで食事する場面で録音された3つの会話や、録音なしで筆者が聞き取ったアイロニーの発話のフィールドノートの2種類である。

分析方法は3点の段階を含める：最初にアイロニーの語用論的な産出の三つの条件を満たす発話を探す。単純に言うと、アイロニーの発話では、①話し手は成立しなかった期待を持つ、②その成立しなかった期待を持ったことは語用論的に示される、その語用論的な信号で話し手の態度を表す (Kumon-Nakamura et al., 1995)。その3つの条件を満たすアイロニー発話は次に筒井(1989)や Okamoto (2007) の述べたアイロニー（皮肉）の語用論的な手がかりを使用されるかどうか、されない場合はその代わりに何が使用されるかを確認する。そして最後に、アイロニーがどのように冗談として使用されるか、または評価と冗談の関係を解明するために Boxer (2002) の会話に起こるユーモアの3種類（からかい、自虐的ユーモア、存在しない第三者のからかい）を参考にし、アイロニー的発話とその3種類のユーモアを観察する。

データを用い、アイロニーに関する以下の3点の研究課題を明らかにする：

1. どのような識別できる語用論的な手がかりが現れるか？

その手がかりは Okamoto (2007) に述べられたものに違いはあるか、ないか？

2. データによって日本語ではアイロニーを用いることでどのようなからかい、自虐的ユーモア、存在していない人のからかいが可能であるか？

3: 皮肉はユーモラスな雰囲気からマイナス評価までの使用を持つ可能性があるか？或は、皮肉はマイナス評価だけを表すか？

3. 分析

合計で47つのアイロニー発話を発見したが、特に自然会話で語用論的な手がかりやユーモアの種類の区別する時にカテゴリーを重なる発話も観察した。以下のリストはその重なるケースを反映する。

テレビ番組の会話	合計	友達同士の会話	合計
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シルシルミシルサンデー (スクリプト) (3エピソード) (合計8つ)	からかい 6	夕飯 (20分) 5人 (合計2つ)	からかい 1
	自虐 2		自虐 1
	不存在者 0		不存在者 1
	皮肉・マイナス評価 0		皮肉・マイナス評価 0
おしゃれイズム (インタビュー) (3エピソード) (合計11つ)	からかい 8	夕飯 (2時間) 4人 (合計2つ)	からかい 1
	自虐 5		自虐 1
	不存在者 1		不存在者 0
	皮肉・マイナス評価 0		皮肉・マイナス評価 0
テレビドラマ 不機嫌なジーンズ (3) 君はペット (3) ラブシャッフル (3) (合計15つ)	からかい 4	夕飯 (2時間) 2人 (合計2つ) (フィールド (合計6つ))	からかい 4
	自虐 1		自虐 1
	不存在者 0		不存在者 3
	皮肉・マイナス評価 10		皮肉・マイナス評価 0

3.1: アイロニーの語用論的な手がかり

主に8つの種類の語用論的な手がかりを注意した：つくり誉め言葉、つくり挨拶、修辞疑問、状況の不現実的な解釈、控えめや誇張、状況そのままの解釈、敬語の使用・不使用、そしてエコー（反復）という区別をした。Okamoto (2007)に述べられた手がかりが多くは見つからなかったが、以上の手がかりはすべて現れた。

Okamoto (2007)のリストは主に小説、新聞等で「皮肉的に」などのキーワードによって皮肉として分かる発話であった。会話におけるアイロニーはそう簡単に言語化されないので、会話ではその数多くの手がかりが現れないと考える。また、Okamoto (2007)は Kumon-Nakamura et al. (1995) の Allusional Pretense 理論の三つのアイロニー発話の産出条件に対して、語用論的な手がかりのカテゴリーを作ったが、本研究では手がかりを区別するときにエコーやふりの発話や意見 (pretense) がその手がかりの2つだと考えるので、その区別を含めるかどうかを判断

するのが難しかった。また、いくつかの手がかりが重なるところもあるので、最終的に手がかりをそう細かく区別する必要はないかと考えた。

3.2: 3つの会話のユーモア（からかい、自虐ユーモア、不存在者のからかい）

すべての会話の種類を、テレビドラマの場合は皮肉のようなアイロニーだけを観察した。そのようなアイロニーは会話にユーモアをもたらす機能ではなく、マイナス評価を強く表すために使用され则认为。一方、ユーモアを持ち出すという第一目標を持つバラエティー番組の多数のアイロニー発言はからかうために使用されたことが観察された。インタビューや食事の会話、フィールドノートなどの自然会話の方はバラエティー番組と同じく、マイナス評価を表す皮肉は少ないが、観察したアイロニー発言が自虐的なユーモアや相手を軽くからかう冗談として使用される。

3.3: 皮肉のユーモアからマイナス評価までの使い方

皮肉 (sarcasm) はテレビドラマ以外、全体的に使用されるのは珍しいことで、テレビドラマの場合、皮肉は人を傷つけるために使用されることが分かる。それに対し、自然会話に不存在の第三者のからかいを皮肉で表す場合、それはその第三者にマイナス評価を表すより聞き手を笑わせる方が目標だと思われるので、その場合皮肉がユーモラスな機能を持つと考えられる。

4. 今後の課題

本研究が皮肉やアイロニーを自然会話やテレビドラマの会話においてどのようにユーモアとして使用されるかを観察したが、日本語のアイロニーと英語のアイロニーの使用を比較分析しなかったため、今後の研究ではその言語によるユーモアとしてのアイロニー使用を明らかにするべきだと考える。その比較研究の中ではアイロニー使用がどの場合に許されるか、どの場合許されないか、または使用される時にどのような効果を持つかを含めて分析したいと思う。

そして、アイロニーを使用する人の年齢、性別等の社会的関係との関連を明らかにする研究も必要だと考える。特に、海外経験を持つ人が母語でアイロニー使用が増加するかどうかという社会的影響も日本語のアイロニー研究に含めるべき分野だと考える。

Chapter 1: Introduction

Irony is an insult conveyed in the form of a compliment.

Edwin P. Whipple

Humor is everywhere, in that there is irony in just about anything a human does.

Bill Nye

1.1 Introduction

The above quotes neatly encapsulate the divergent opinions on irony, both in society and in the world of linguistics. On the one hand, irony is associated with negativity, duplicity, and the desire to cut down or criticize. This might also be considered the older or more traditional understanding of verbal irony. On the other hand, though, verbal irony is seen as recognizing and even taking pleasure in what is unexpected or ironic, or to mitigate what may otherwise be an un-humorous situation. While one can certainly not argue that irony is always positive, one must also avoid the opposite extreme. The focus of this research is the positive role of irony, particularly as a tool for conversational joking, and how it can be used in Japanese conversation.

In researching definitions of irony, the most prominent feature I notice is how many sub-definitions the term embraces, as evidenced in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary's three-part definition:

1. A pretense of ignorance and willingness to learn from another assumed in order to make the other's false conceptions conspicuous by adroit questioning – called also *Socratic irony*
2.
 - a. the use of words to express something other than and especially the opposite of the literal meaning
 - b. a usually humorous or sardonic literary style or form characterized by irony
 - c. an ironic expression or utterance

3. **a** (1) : incongruity between the actual result of a sequence of events and the normal or expected result (2) : an event or result marked by such incongruity

b : incongruity between a situation developed in a drama and the accompanying words or actions that is understood by the audience but not by the characters in the play —called also *dramatic irony*, *tragic irony*

The Oxford English Dictionary Online provides a similar account of irony, the second sub-definition reading:

- (1) *The expression of one's meaning by using language that normally signifies the opposite, typically for humorous or emphatic effect.*

Recent linguistic research into the functions of verbal irony echoes these far-flung definitions of irony, showing that as often as irony can be used to negative effect in conversation, to criticize, condemn, judge, and belittle (Grice, 2000; Sperber and Wilson, 1992; Attardo, 2002; Boxer, 2002), it can also be used in a positive manner, to bond and to mitigate negative opinions or statements (Myers Roy, 1981; Dews et al., 1995; Clift, 1999; Gibbs, 2000) and furthermore, irony is often capable of accomplishing both criticism and bonding at once (Dews et al., 1995; Boxer and Cortés-Conde, 1997; Clift, 1999), and that its use, in either positive or negative ways, is largely dependent on the context of the conversation and those participating within it (Jorgenson, 1996; Attardo, 2002; Boxer, 2002; Reyes et al., 2012).

There is also ample evidence to point to the connection between using irony and using humor in a conversation. A large number of studies have pointed to their shared pragmatic cues (Attardo, 2002; Hirsch, 2011; Eisterhold et al., 2012), and in their functions in conversation (Boxer and Cortés-Conde, 1997; Gibbs, 2000). More specifically, irony has been found to be central to joking such as jocularity, and teasing

(Boxer, 2002). Irony's functions in conversation as a tool for humor have been well established in a number of studies in English, but as to the humorous function of irony in conversation in Japanese, few studies have attempted to investigate what, if any, positive role irony has to play in conversation.

1.2 Motivation

I have always understood irony as easily accessible inside jokes. While I am aware that sarcastic irony can bite and belittle, and have been both the creator and recipient of such forms, the majority of the verbal irony I experience day-to-day – watching television, inside a classroom, speaking with friends and family, with seatmates on an airplane – has been a form of friendliness. With irony, one can subtly share past experiences or known opinions with close friends who, by virtue of their knowledge of you, can understand the ironic intent immediately. Alternatively, one can imply unvoiced thoughts with strangers, which by virtue of the irony in a situation itself, creates a mutual understanding almost in the nature of a verbal wink.

However as a student of Japanese, I encountered a difficult transition in mode of expression. The means with which I was most comfortable creating bonds with others, joking, and creating affiliation between myself and my conversational partners did not seem to translate well into Japanese. Though irony is believed to be a universal linguistic strategy (Sperber and Wilson, 1981), the most prototypical types of irony – saying the opposite of my intended meaning – proved incomprehensible both as a sentence and as an attempt at joking to native Japanese speakers.

Furthermore, as an English instructor to Japanese students, it became clear to me that most if not all students were incapable of comprehending irony in conversation. It is to an extent a matter of personality and culture to what degree one uses irony, but it is also undeniable that, as Gibbs (2000) asserts, Americans now live in an age where irony is easiest and most common way to display wit and humor. That students were incapable of understanding the pragmatic meaning of a conversation involving irony indicated to me that a cultural understanding of humor and irony is essential for those students wishing to become competent English speakers.

Verbal irony has been found to be both more critical and more humorous than non-ironic utterances, both in English and in Japanese (Gibbs, 2000; Okamoto, 2007), yet the emphasis on humorous use or criticism-mitigating use of irony in Japanese is not as robust as that in English. Likewise, research in English finds that irony, far from being a one-dimensional linguistic tool with one particular set of pragmatic cues, is multi-dimensional, using different pragmatic cues toward different ends based largely on the context of the conversation and the people involved in it (Simpson, 2011; Kapogianni, 2011; Giora, 2011), yet this expanding understanding of the cues and humorous roles irony plays in conversation is not reflected in Japanese research.

The majority of research conducted on irony in Japanese conversation remains limited to the role of irony in expressing criticism (Okamoto, 2002; Nakamura, 2009; Nakamura, 2011), whether to weaken or strengthen it. There is a small body of research investigating the perception of verbal irony in Japanese, but there is little research utilizing natural data in the form of recorded conversation, rather than prefabricated discourse completion surveys. While Okamoto (2007) has used written texts such as novels, magazines and newspapers for analysis, recent research into the role of irony in conversation has focused exclusively on discourse completion tests and participant reaction to written scenarios (Nakamura, 2009; Nakamura, 2011).

A major problem with textoids and simulated irony is that it may by design limit the true scope of irony in conversation, it's function skewed by the researcher's ultimate goals (Boxer, 2002). Likewise, investigation of verbal irony through participant-based analysis of written texts deviates far from the original form under investigation (that being occurrences of irony in spoken conversation). Thus, Japanese research demonstrates a paucity of real-life examples of irony in conversation used in analysis, how it is generated, and how it is used.

1.3 Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to examine how irony is pragmatically signaled and how it functions as a form of humor in Japanese conversation. In English, irony can function as conversational joking in the form of teasing, self-depreciation, or mocking or teasing

absent others, often while simultaneously performing other tasks such as softening criticism and creating and affirming bonds between listener and speaker. This research intends, through analysis of recorded, televised, and scripted conversations, to clarify if and in what ways irony can be used for humor in Japanese conversation. There are three main research questions for this paper:

- Q1 What discernible types of pragmatic cues were present?
 - a. Do they bear any resemblance to the cues suggested by Okamoto (2007)?
- Q2 What forms of teasing, jocularity, and self-deprecating humor can occur using irony in Japanese across the data?
- Q3 Does sarcasm exist on a continuum between mocking and humorous, or is it entirely critical?

The ultimate goal is to find what common ground verbal irony and humor share in Japanese. To that end, it will also shed light on how irony is produced, how it is used, and how it differs from Japanese to English.

1.4 Limitations

It is beyond both the goals and the scope of this paper to address several issues related to the central research questions. Those issues include an in-depth discussion of the numerous theories that account for the production and processing of verbal irony, a wide-ranging sample of conversations from which to pull data and thus a quantitative analysis discussing frequency of irony use, and finally, the motivations behind the particular uses of irony in Japanese conversation.

In discussing the methodology behind identifying irony, there will be some discussion of the major theories of how irony is pragmatically produced and cued in conversation, including the echoic mention theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1992), and the allusional pretense theory (Kumon-Nakamura et al, 1995), and the implicit display theory (Utsumi, 2000) as well as a discussion of the other pragmatic cues that form the

prerequisites for identifying ironic utterances, detailed accounts of the other theories that are commonly discussed in research on irony in conversation are not central to the discussion of how irony is used for humor in Japanese. For a comprehensive outline on the major theories on the production and processing of verbal irony see Simpson (2011).

In the interest of conducting a qualitative analysis on the function of irony and humor in Japanese conversation, this research does not seek to establish how often irony is used in conversation, nor would it claim to have a sample size large enough to make any such claims. It will also not focus on sociolinguistic factors of irony in conversation, including the gender and age of the conversation participants. While the gender and age will be noted, these factors will not be discussed in any depth as to their influence on the use and perception of irony.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is organized into five chapters. In Chapter 1 I have presented the introduction and motivation of this study. Chapter 2 introduces the key terminology, namely the meaning of the term irony and humor in relation to the study. In this chapter I briefly introduce the various concepts of irony, including research discussing how it is produced and comprehended, what functions it serves in conversation, and how it is defined. I then discuss the central role of irony in conversation as a tool for humor, and establish a definition based on previous research in this field of humor, particularly of the more specific category of humor: conversational joking. This chapter will also include a review of previous work that has focused on the role of irony in conversation, chiefly in English, but when indicated, in other Western languages. The topics covered through this review include how irony is used for humor in conversation, the definitions of irony and its relation to the Japanese term *hiniku*, the pragmatic cues through which irony is signaled in English and in Japanese, and existing research in the role of irony in Japanese. I finally discuss the limitations of these studies and how they can be improved upon both in methodology and analysis.

In Chapter 3 I describe the methodology of the current study. While previous studies of the role of irony in Japanese conversation have largely focused on the

researcher-controlled discourse completion surveys, surveys of reader-response to ironic utterances in prefabricated conversations, and analysis of the impact of irony as criticism, the current study aims to demonstrate through broader examination of both naturally occurring and scripted conversation how humor and irony can be used together in conversation. I discuss the means through which the data was obtained, including recordings of multiple instances of dinner-party conversations between participants of between two to five people, recorded television interviews and narrated voice-overs, field notes of conversations, and scripted television dramas. Chapter 3 also includes a discussion of the theoretical framework for identifying ironic utterances in conversation, including the pragmatic cues and theories outlined in Chapter 2. Finally, the last part of Chapter 3 discusses how my data was gathered, how the data was organized and transcribed, and any ethical considerations as to the nature of my data collection.

The first part of Chapter 4 discusses the results of my data analysis, including an overview of what kinds of ironic utterances were found, and how many of each instance. I discuss what kinds of pragmatic cues signaled irony in the data, based on the theoretical frameworks discussed in Chapter 2 (Research Q1). Specifically, I discuss to what extent irony found in conversations used for this study is echoic, based on pretense, or produced in manners different from those reviewed in Chapter 2, and how they compare to the cues listed in Okamoto (2007) and Tsutsui (1989) (Q1a.) Next, I discuss the humorous application of irony in conversation based on the three forms of conversational joking discussed in Chapter 3 (Q2). I also discuss the instances of sarcastic irony and its relationship to humor and criticism (Q3). Finally, Chapter 5 concludes with a summary of my research and a review of the research questions. In addition, I discuss the limitations of this study and questions for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Terminology

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the previous research, including discussion of key concepts and terminology used in previous studies of irony, are introduced. I will first discuss the traditional definition of irony and how it has evolved and expanded, and provide my own definition. I will then discuss the theoretical frameworks used in previous studies to discuss how irony is pragmatically signaled and produced. In addition, I will introduce the research in irony in Japanese, and a comparison of the terms *irony*, *sarcasm*, and *hiniku*, as well as the pragmatic cues found to signal irony in Japanese conversation.

2.2 Defining Irony

While irony has several different specific forms, including dramatic, Socratic, situational, and verbal, verbal irony is the irony central to this study. Verbal irony is generally understood as either making a statement which is somehow opposed to or contrasted with reality or real opinions, or commenting on an ironic situation (Kihara, 2005; Utsumi, 1997; Reyes et al., 2012; Gibbs, 2000). Okamoto (2007) argues that the distinction is key in exploring how irony is produced and used. For the purposes of this research, as verbal irony can encompass commenting on an ironic situation, the more important term to understand fully is verbal irony.

Establishing a firm definition of irony is difficult largely because definitions often fail to account for the number of forms irony can take and the number of functions it serves. The traditional definition of irony generally holds that ironic statements are those in which the speaker's stated meaning is the opposite of the intended meaning (Meyers Roy, 1981; Sperber and Wilson, 1998), often to enhance criticism (Sperber and Wilson, 1998). Kotthoff (2002) summarizes the definitions of irony first suggested by Lay (1992):

- (1) 1. Saying the opposite of what one means, 2. Saying something other than what one thinks, 3. Criticism as praise or praise as

criticism, or 4. Making fun or ridicule. (*Lay 1992 via Kotthoff 2003*).

However, there are other ironic statements that do not demonstrate a clear and recognizable opposition between stated and intended meaning (Meyers Roy, 1981; Burgers et al., 2012; Simpson, 2011) , prompting more recent researchers to consider what role opposition plays in creating irony. Myers Roy (1981) argues that a more adequate definition of irony would refer to an opposition not of lexical meaning but of pragmatic meaning, such that irony would be defined as saying something for which there is a mismatch between the actual situation and the stated sentence. The intended meaning of an ironic “thank you,” for example, would not be understood through considering the semantically opposite meaning, but through considering the pragmatically opposite meaning, something along the lines of “You did not help me.” Thus, she argues, the notion of “opposite” can be maintained.

The definition of irony has since evolved in linguistic research, discarding “opposite” in favor of “contrast.” Giora (2011) refers to this contrast as a “gap,” between what is said and what is actually being experienced, in which irony is formed, and that the greater the “gap,” the stronger the sense of irony. Colston and O’Brien (2000) establish the contrast or incongruity inherent in irony to be not only between the statement and the topic, but also the contrast between the perception of that event before and after an ironic statement is made. Burgers et al. (2012) argue that a reconstructed definition of irony involves an “evaluative valence” between stated and intended meanings, and both propose that the larger the contrast, the stronger the irony. This is similar to the key elements Kapogianni (2011) argues must be included in a comprehensive definition of irony: contrast, unexpectedness, and evaluation. The definition has thus expanded to embrace a more wide-ranging term, contrast, and a concept of stronger and weaker irony – degree of contrast relating to degree of irony.

Simpson (2011) distills the consideration of pragmatic versus semantic contrast, as well as the argument for an element of evaluation (or attitude) in the argument that definitions of irony must change based on the form of irony being used. This argument is

itself predicated on the belief that irony is multifaceted both in form and function, produced through various means (be they opposition, semantic or pragmatic contrast, or evaluation), and will not be successfully defined through a one-dimensional definition based on either simply “opposites” or “contrasts.”

Thus, in defining irony, the key term outlined by a number of researchers has been the notion of “contrast,” most often viewed as the incongruity between either the statement and the intended meaning (Myers Roy, 1981; Kreuz, 2000), or the contrast between the statement of events and the speaker’s comment (Colston and O’Brien, 2000), often if not always to highlight the speaker’s attitude toward the actual event, positive or negative (Sperber and Wilson, 1992; Kumon-Nakamura et al., 1995; Utsumi, 2000). For the purposes of this paper, informed by the definitions of irony made by previous research, the current research defines irony as follows:

(2) Verbal Irony:

A statement in which a speaker is expressing an attitude or opinion, which cannot be understood through a strictly literal interpretation of the statement, but through a contrasting (sometimes opposing) interpretation.

2.2.2 Forms or cues of irony?

It is useful in discussing the definition of irony to underscore the role that the term plays as an umbrella for different forms of ironic speech. Irony is considered by some researchers to be the unifying term for a number of different cues or types of irony, including *hyperbole*, *rhetorical question*, *jocular*, *understatement* and *sarcasm* (Gibbs, 2000), but others consider these not forms of irony, but pragmatic cues (Burgers et al., 2012; Kreuz, 2000). Furthermore, what Gibbs (2000) classifies as “jocular” is a type of irony whose chief function is to tease or joke in a somewhat biting manner, but a number of other studies classify this not as a type of irony, but one of its chief functions (Colston and O’Brien, 2000). Indeed, on a spectrum of teasing from bonding to biting,

“jocularity” would likely be more often classified as *sarcasm* in that it is more critical than humorous, but not perceived as outright aggressive (Kotthoff, 2003). Some researchers regard the terms *irony* and *sarcasm* to be interchangeable (Jorgenson, 1996), and still others consider terms such as *sarcasm*, *irony* and *understatement* to be distinct linguistic phenomena produced by different mechanisms and used to distinct effects (Kapogianni, 2011). This research agrees with Tsutsui (1989), that irony and sarcasm, as well are related in that sarcasm is always ironic, while irony is not always sarcastic.

In the recent discussions of irony in conversation, these various terms are treated less as different forms of irony, and more as different pragmatic cues of irony that help to demonstrate how multifaceted and complex irony is both in form and function (Simpson, 2011; Kapogianni, 2011; Giora, 2011; Burgers et al., 2012). This research intends to treat these terms as varying pragmatic cues of irony, rather than as distinct from irony.

2.3 Theoretical Frameworks

2.3.1 Irony production

Irony in conversation is considered chiefly on two levels: how it is pragmatically produced, and its pragmatic function. Irony is first understood to be produced through violating a Gricean Maxim. Paul Grice’s Cooperative Principle, which can be explained through his four Conversational Maxims (or Gricean Maxims), are used to explain the rules speakers follow to ensure the listener can understand their utterances, and include the Maxim of Quality (be truthful), the Maxim of Quantity (make comments as informative but not more informative than needed), the Maxim of Relation (be relevant), and the Maxim of Manner (be orderly and brief) (Grice, 1975). The example of the ironic “thank you,” for example, when someone has not completed a request, is a violation of the *Maxim of Quality*: be truthful, and is the most-often violated maxim in creating ironic utterances (Myers Roy, 1981). On the other hand, some ironic sentences can on face value be literal, but nevertheless are considered ironic in that they violate the Maxim of Quantity: Say as much as, but not more than, is necessary, such as (3) cited in Myers Roy (1981):

- (3) That was a curb you just ran over.

This comment, spoken by the passenger of a car to her mother the driver, after having driven up on the curb, is considered via the Cooperative Principle to be a violation of the Maxim of Quantity in that, having just run over the curb herself, the driver is aware of this state of affairs, and the comment is self-evident and thus superfluous.

Though originally thought by Grice to be the one necessary element in identifying irony, flouting Gricean Maxims is considered one, but not the only, method, as some ironic comments can adhere to Gricean Maxims, and some flouted maxims can be un-ironic (Hashimoto, 1989). Theories of how verbal irony is then distinct from lying or joking argue that ironic utterances are echoic, a form of pretense, or arise from ironic situations.

The echoic mention theory of irony (Sperber and Wilson, 1986) posits that irony is an echo of a previously stated idea, state of affairs, or belief, which through the act of repeating highlights a speaker's negative attitude toward the original statement. While empirical studies show that many (Gibbs, 2000) if not all (Clift, 1999) forms of irony are echoic, other studies have pointed to examples of ironic statements which point to no originating comment, such as commenting "what lovely weather" on a rainy day (Kihara, 2005). With no previous reference in the conversation to weather or expectations of the weather, this utterance does not appear to be echoic. Sperber and Wilson address the issue of such cases by broadening the definition of "echo" beyond the traditional sense, so that an echo may not specifically reference a previous statement, but might echo "real or imaginary thoughts," "people in general," or cultural norms (Sperber and Wilson, 1992: 60).

In attempting to reconcile the Sperber and Wilson broadly-defined echoic nature of irony with those instances that is less echoic, Kumon-Nakamura et al. (1995)'s allusional pretense theory of irony swaps the notion of irony as containing an echoed thought, statement or idea with an "allusion," to a violated expectation, prediction, or norm (Kumon-Nakamura et al., 1995: 5). The pretense refers to the statement made: one

that the speaker is only pretending to hold in order to call attention to his or her failed expectations. This theory goes on to outline a more detailed, three-step explanation of how irony is produced: ironic utterances are first signaled through some pragmatic insincerity, which provides a form of contrast between either the event and the speaker's remark, or between the speaker's remark and actual beliefs. The term "pragmatic insincerity" is meant to include those ironic comments which are true, but insincere (Colston, 2000). Finally, through this contrast, an ironic utterance highlights or alludes to some attitude the speaker has toward the topic. Kumon-Nakamura et al. (1995) note that this attitude is often, but is not necessarily, a negative attitude. While this theory is clearer in defining how irony will be signaled beyond a notion of echo, it still fails to provide a theoretical basis for why irony must be both allusional (or echoic) and have pretense (Kihara, 2005).

Finally, the implicit display theory of irony (Utsumi, 2000) is a further distillation of the allusional pretense theory that establishes irony as an indirect expression of a speaker's negative evaluation of a failed expectation, signaled through pragmatic insincerity (Utsumi, 2000; 1784-1785). Utsumi's theory of irony requires some form of violated Gricean maxim, as well as a negative attitude expressed through a number of pragmatic cues similar to, though not specifically identified as, common cues of irony: hyperbole, understatement, rhetorical question, facial expression, and tone of voice. The implicit display theory, unlike its predecessors, does not attempt to draw a firm distinction between what utterances are ironic and what are not, but rather argues that irony has degrees that are increased or decreased through the use of cues and the type and number of pragmatic insincerities made.

Each of these theories adopt the view that through alluding to some unmet expectation in the form of pragmatic insincerity can irony be cued. As will be seen with the analysis of irony in Japanese below, as well, this theory does not adequately explain how, as Colston (2000) refers to it "negative jests," or positive evaluations of an individual delivered in an ironically negative tone, are ironic. Though negative jests could be considered a form of pretense, they do not necessarily imply any negative

evaluation or attitude, weakening the argument that all ironic utterances will contain a negative or critical evaluation of an unmet or unexpected situation (Colston, 2000).

2.3.2 Functions of irony in conversation

Many accounts of the function of irony in conversation explain its application through Politeness Theory (Brown and Levinson, 1987), in that irony is a form of politeness because indirectness is more non-threatening to the listener or speaker's face than directness (Dews et al., 1995). Jorgenson (1996), for example, posits that sarcasm is used for criticism with trivial issues because speakers seek to save their own positive face (rather than that of the hearer). Likewise, Dews et al. (1995) argue through the Tinge Hypothesis that irony, in burying criticism under an apparent form of praise, muddles the listener's perception of a negative attitude or criticism. Finally, several researchers have examined the use of irony through the perspective of framing, most often in how irony helps to create a play frame in conversation (Boxer, 2002).

However, the opposite effect has also been examined: in creating a contrast that calls attention to the speaker's failed expectations, irony can be a face-threatening act in that it can appear either defensive or punishing on the part of the speaker (Boxer, 2002; Jorgenson, 1996). When irony is perceived as hostile or aggressive, it is damaging to the speaker's face in that they appear aggressive and critical, and is damaging to the hearer in that the statement strongly implies some failing on the part of the listener (Jorgenson, 1996).

Use of irony in conversation has also been found to build rapport and relieve tension (Boxer, 2002), as well as to underscore a point (Kreuz, 2000; Boxer, 2002). Finally, irony is a form of play in conversation which can simultaneously involve the above functions (Eisterhold et al., 2006; Kapogianni, 2011; Simpson, 2011; Leggitt and Gibbs, 2011, Utsumi, 1997).

2.3.3 Irony and Humor in Conversation

Research of irony occurring in natural conversation supports the idea that irony and humor can go together in conversation to function as a face-saving tool, or to bring

playfulness and teasing to the conversation (Kotthoff, 1996; Clift, 1999; Gibbs, 2000; Attardo, 2001; Boxer, 2002). In a paper putting forth a theory on the production and function of irony in conversation, Rebecca Clift (1999) utilized recorded data as well as corpus data to examine how irony is used between friends and family. She concluded that traditional definitions of irony do not capture the multiple meanings inside ironic utterances. (similar to the findings of Colston and O'Brien, 2000; Hirsch, 2011; Simpson, 2011; Jorgenson, 1996; Gibbs, 2000), and proposed that irony be considered according to Goffman's concept of framing: framing allows the listener to understand the two "dimensions" of meaning in an ironic utterance. Rather than consider the intended meaning of an ironic utterance as cancelling out the stated meaning, Clift (1999) argues that listeners perceive ironic comments because the intended meaning is contrasted against the stated meaning. With framing, a speaker can be ironic by, as she terms, "shifting footing" into a role without being perceived as committed to that role. The irony and the humor of a statement arises out of the contrast between the actual utterance and the expectation the utterance invokes, which is not always aimed at a specific target, as seen in (4) below.

(4) You didn't eat your apple sauce (.) After all the trouble (.) I took about four hours to make it. (Clift, 1999: 545)

Clift notes that far from the traditional and reductive understanding of irony as being "inherently critical," disapproving and hostile (Clift, 1999: 545), such instances of irony would be cruel, but that the relationship of the participants renders such ironic comments as demonstrations of the intimacy between speaker and listener. This example is particularly useful for demonstrating the flexibility of irony: that it is useful in otherwise humorless occasions, that it brings humor and shared understanding to the conversation without overtly stating it, and that it is markedly lacking in intentional or implied criticism.

Clift argues that the possible hostility in an ironic comment may be more apparent when the speaker and listener have more social distance between them, but that even in

situations where conversational participants are not intimates, that does not automatically ascribe a critical intent to ironic statements, but may itself be an attempt to create intimacy (more on this with Hirsch, 2011). Ultimately, Clift (1999) argues that irony between intimates in particular is a form of conversational joking and play, and that the more critical and negative forms of irony in conversation are, in fact, sarcastic, with an obvious critical intent.

In fact this notion of affiliation and intent informing the humorous or negative impact of irony is echoed in examples cited in Jorgenson (1996) below:

(5) *A husband, to his wife who has just fallen out of bed.*

Been walking long?

(Jorgenson, 1996)

(6) *Two sisters, one of whom is preparing to leave for work.*

Where are you going? To work?

No, to a party! Where do you think?

(Jorgenson, 1996)

Both (5) and (6) are between close family members, discounting any social distance that might otherwise imply negativity (according to Clift (1999)'s theory), yet (5) is taken as a humorous banter, and “mock” criticism, while (6) is seen as biting, and not at all humorous.

While Clift posits that the effect of irony will depend on the conversational participants and their background and relationship together, other theories of how irony can traverse the line from teasing to criticism involve restrictions on when ironic comments are acceptable. In more serious situations, such as a surgeon failing to save a patient, “good job” would be highly inappropriate and outright aggressive sarcasm, thus implying that the impact of irony is situational. Burgers (2011) states that irony is perceived largely according to the context of the conversation, and this is echoed in Eisterhold et al. (2011), who point out that irony as humor is a relatively risky

conversational tool most likely to occur between intimates who will not conflate the speaker's intended meaning.

Cognitive linguist Raymond Gibbs (2001) sought to clarify the way people use and respond to irony in conversation, and through recording 65 5-10 minute conversations between 149 college students and their friends in settings such as homes, restaurants, college dorms, and bars, examined naturally occurring irony, how frequently it was used, in what different ways, and to what effect. Identification of irony was based on instances where a speaker demonstrated a contrast between expectation and reality. Gibbs (2001) found a total of 289 instances of irony. Though the participants in the conversation were the initial classifiers of statements of irony, the researcher made ultimate decisions on classification of utterances, and ultimately classified irony into five different types: jocularity, sarcasm, rhetorical questions, hyperbole, and understatement.

Gibbs (2001) found that in jocular irony, the subject of the irony was usually a person and not an event, and was signaled overwhelmingly by echo, pretense, or a combination of the two. In addition, a large majority of the utterances were viewed by the listeners as being humorous, and were responded to with ironic utterances. He also found that sarcastic irony was often created through some form of pretense or echo, and that sarcastic irony, like jocularity, most often concerned people and what they had said or done. A majority of sarcastic comments were found to be critical, but were also judged humorous by the listener, further supporting the claim that irony can be critical and humorous at the same time. Furthermore he found that the more critical an ironic statement was, the higher the degree of humor was perceived.

One conclusion of the study was that irony was not a "single category of figurative language," but a variety of types signaled in different ways and used toward different ends, with different pragmatic meanings attached to them. It was also concluded that irony was a form of playful talk, in which both speaker and listener collaborate to "exploit" and "celebrate" a shared situation or belief, or the simple existence of irony in a situation. In evaluating how these forms of irony were produced, Gibbs (2000) concluded that the Kumon-Nakamura et al. (1995) theory of Allusional Pretense did indeed outline

the two key factors in producing and identifying ironic utterances: a speaker's allusion to a violated expectation, and the signaling of that feeling through pragmatic insincerity.

While Clift (1999) and Gibbs (2000) agree that sarcasm is the more critical form of irony, Gibbs (2000) found that irony is capable of being simultaneously critical and humorous, bolstering the findings of both Kotthoff (2003) in her study of irony in conversation between German speakers, and in Jorgenson (1996) and her study of the face-saving effects of sarcasm in conversation. Helga Kotthoff (2003) recorded and analyzed 30 hours of dinner conversation as well as 20 hours of conversation from an evening TV program in order to examine listener reaction to ironic comments. For the private conversations, all conversation, and thus all ironic utterances, were between intimates, which she argued explains why irony is often responded to with "teasing sequences": intimates are more likely to engage in the "playful biting" of teasing because they feel secure in doing so without causing actual damage to each other.

This finding is replicated in several other studies that find irony to be a form of humor that both mutes criticism and creates a positive atmosphere, both between intimates (Clift, 1999; Eisterhold et al., 2006) as well as in more formal settings such as between teachers and students (Boxer, 2002). Additionally, the argument for sarcasm as a distinct form of irony whose chief function is criticism if not belittling created through the context of the conversation, the social distance between conversational participants, and the gap between the statement and intended meaning, is also replicated in other studies (Boxer, 2002; Jorgenson, 1996).

In considering the relationship between intimates and use of irony, Kotthoff (2003) notes that analysis of the recorded TV programs shows less use of irony most likely because the lack of close affiliation between speakers precluded using a potentially critical-sounding linguistic device like irony. Where 51 ironic sequences were found in the dinner conversations, only 24 were found in the televised conversations, alluding to the fact that irony is, indeed, a conversational tool most successfully used between friends. Kotthoff concludes that irony would be a natural device for speakers in conversation with friends to use, because it denotes teasing, which she notes features highly in conversations between friends.

The relationship between intimates and use of irony has some overlap with the pragmatics of humor. Galia Hirsch (2011) examined the overlap in pragmatic cues of irony and humor in order to better understand their relationship. Her analysis was done on literature texts in English and English translations of Hebrew and Spanish texts, yet the evaluation and comparison of pragmatic cues for irony and humor is easily applicable to verbal irony and its relationship to humor.

Hirsch (2011) hews to the belief that one prerequisite in cuing irony must be disapproval, yet this is more understandable in light of the data used: irony in literature will most often assume the reader to understand that the speaker himself is the target of the irony and thus the victim of some judgment. The more interesting feature of her research is the examination of the pragmatic cues for irony and humor, and where they overlap. Irony is signaled, she notes, through flouting Gricean Maxims, and through some echoic mention which signals of an attitude of disapproval, or through some pretense or adopted attitude. Irony is also signaled chiefly through some incongruity or contrast – between what is stated and intended, and its impact can be found in the surprise or unexpectedness in this echo or pretense (as noted above by Kothoff, 2003).

Humor is pragmatically signaled through similar means – it is a contrast not between spoken and intended meanings, but more often a semantic contrast that pits one meaning of a given word against another, contrasted meaning (Gibbs and Colston, 2001). This also involves unexpectedness and ambiguity, so that the opposing scripts with multiple possible interpretations set up the humorous effect (Reyes et al., 2012). Irony and humor often have in common the element of contrast, the element of unexpectedness, and the element of ambiguity. They are also both capable of creating play frames for conversation wherein the metamessage of both humorous language and ironic language would be *this is play* (Boxer, 2002). Where they diverge is in the presence or absence of a target or victim – humor does not always need a target for criticism, Clift (1999) claims, but irony does.

If irony is usually but not always critical, as Kothoff (2011) posits, it has also been found to be critical to absent third parties as a way for present parties to bond over shared attitudes, beliefs, or backgrounds. Boxer and Cortés-Conde (1997) offer up a

simpler relationship between irony and humor: conversational joking. While conversational joking is considered an element within the umbrella term of humor, they maintain it can itself be subdivided into three types: teasing, joking about an absent other, and self-deprecation. These three forms of conversational joking have significant overlap with the function of irony in conversation: as demonstrated, irony can be used to bond and be humorous through joking about oneself, joking together about an absent other, or teasing either in friendly or aggressive ways. Thus, while irony and humor share pragmatic cues, irony is considered a linguistic device for conversational joking, the effect of which can be humor.

2.4 Irony in Japanese

2.4.1 Irony vs. *hiniku*

There is no consensus on the divide between irony and sarcasm, but a number of researchers believe that sarcasm will always have a victim (Jorgenson, 1996; Kotthoff, 2003; Okamoto, 2007), and be capable of belittling and shame (Boxer, 2002). Research in irony in Japanese has long acknowledged the incongruity between the English term *irony* and the Japanese term, *hiniku*. Okamoto (2007) notes that the term *hiniku* has a number of definitions, all of them alluding to negativity or the desire to criticize or cut down, or referring to an undesirable outcome, and notes that some definitions are as specifically negative as referring to *hiniku* as “spiteful,” or as broad and unspecific as defining *hiniku* as an “unfortunate” situation (Kindaichi et al., 1984 via Okamoto 2007: 1144). Okamoto (2007) labels *hiniku* as an “approximate” translation of irony because of their similarity in form and function, yet the near universality of the notion that *hiniku* alludes to negativity, criticism, or judgment suggests that *hiniku* is better suited to the term sarcasm than to irony, because as noted above, sarcasm is considered the judgmental or critical form of irony.

Nevertheless, in much irony research until very recently, the term *hiniku* has been used interchangeably with irony despite these differences in meaning and function (Okamoto; 2007), and inform the general outlook on the function of irony in Japanese: few if any studies have considered its function outside of criticism, and those that have

examined its potential other uses in conversation have seen little indication of other functions (Nakamura, 2009; Nakamura, 2011). This study treats irony and *hiniku* much the same as irony and sarcasm is treated in Tsutsui (1989): sarcasm is a more critical form of irony that is always ironic, whereas irony is not always sarcastic in nature.

2.4.2 Theories of irony in Japanese: pragmatic cues

Several studies on irony in Japanese conversation have paid particular attention to the means by which irony is pragmatically signaled (Tsutsui, 1989; Okamoto, 2002; Okamoto, 2001). While in English irony is widely considered to be produced through pragmatic insincerity in the form of violated conversational maxims, hyperbole, and rhetorical question and prosodic cues among other common means, in Japanese the cues can be more detailed.

Tsutsui (1989), concerned with defining what needs to be said to achieve an ironic utterance, argues that irony is not purely a case of extracting the opposite meaning from the stated sentence. Tsutsui further points out outlying forms of irony that clearly do not match this traditional definition: those forms where the point of contrast is not made clear, and those where the speaker does not intend the listener to understand the statement as ironic. Thus, for Tsutsui, examining the pragmatic cues of irony rely significantly less on listener interpretation and significantly more on speaker intention.

She agrees that the key components of irony distinguishing it from other linguistic devices typically is contrast, but that this alone is insufficient to signal irony without an implicit attitude or judgment from the speaker. Furthermore, she demonstrates how these elements of contrast and implied attitude can take many pragmatic forms in the example of a “typically” ironic response of a mother who finds that her son is reading comic books:

- (7) Typical irony: Maa, yoku obenkyou shiterukoto.

Well, look how hard you study.

More subtle: Ara, manga yonderu no ne.

Oh, reading comics are we.

Manga yonderu no?
Are you reading comics?
 Mainichi yondete yoku akinai ne. Kanshin suru wa.
Amazing that you don't grow tired reading every day. I'm in awe.

Ara, neteru no?
Oh, are you sleeping?
 Sono suuji no mondaishu, e ga ooi mitai dakedo.
That math homework seems to have quite a few pictures.
 Akira-kun ha mainichi yon jikan mo benkyou shiterun da tte.
Apparently Akira-kun studies for four hours every day.

Tsutsui notes that the unstated judgment or evaluation takes many forms, from asking a question about the obvious to introducing a comparative figure to suggesting a ludicrous interpretation of the event, which can be summarized into five major pragmatic cues:

- (8)
1. Describing the event literally
 2. Describing the event with a positive evaluation
 3. Inquiring whether the situation is actually happening
 4. Expressing a different situation upon which the same evaluative standard can be applied to the actual situation
 5. Describing a situation which is somehow related to the current situation, but does not state the actual situation

Tsutsui (1989) largely echoes Myers-Roy (1981), and foreshadows more recent research into irony that questions the concept of one form of irony delivering one type of impact. Indeed, for Tsutsui (1989) these different means of conveying a so-called negative evaluation on the speaker's part are ways that develop out of the conversational context, with varying degrees of influence on the following flow of the conversation, as well as the impact of the ironic statement on the listener. This comes very close to insinuating

that irony has degrees of impact depending on the form of expression and the context of the conversation. Furthermore, Tsutsui (1989) argues that examples of irony with no clear implication of a specifically negative evaluation show that the central characteristic of irony is not its conveying of negative evaluations or judgments. Still, she hesitates to assign an alternative function of irony, instead concluding with an open-ended question as to the relationship between irony and communication.

Though the role of irony beyond criticism is considered as early as Tsutsui (1989), few studies of irony in Japanese since then have made steps to uncouple irony from its relationship to negative evaluation. Okamoto (2002) explores the use of inappropriately polite or impolite Japanese as a pragmatic insincerity cue of irony, specifically whether or not politeness occurs with or causes irony. However, in discussing irony, he chooses to use the term *hiniku* which as previously discussed, and as he admits, is an uncomfortable translation for irony in that inherent criticism is not considered a prerequisite of an ironic utterance.

The findings of the study, using written dialogues read and evaluated for politeness level and appropriateness of politeness by college-age study participants, were that pragmatically inappropriate honorific utterances were more humorous than non-honorific utterances when the statements were of a negative evaluation. The results of the study supported the idea that honorifics were probably pragmatic cues of irony, that pragmatically inappropriate honorific use was more offensive than normal honorific use, and also that inappropriate honorific use was more humorous, coinciding with studies of the effect of irony in conversation in English (Gibbs, 2000).

In a follow-up study, Okamoto (2002) distributed similar questionnaires, though this time with politeness levels manipulated to be either over or under polite through the relationship of the conversational participants in the texts and the style of language, hypothesizing that under-polite utterances would need more cues of pragmatic insincerity to be read as ironic. Okamoto explains this claim through the politeness theory: while it is theorized that ironically positive utterances can be identified as ironic because they point to a societal norm (a desired outcome or expected level of politeness), inappropriate impoliteness in Japanese would go against the social norm, and thus not function in the

same way is over-politeness as a cue for irony. The results of this questionnaire indicated that, in fact, inappropriately impolite language was perceived as more ironic than appropriately polite utterances.

Okamoto (2002) concluded that with the context of the status of conversational participants, inappropriate levels of politeness could be judged as a means of producing irony, but as to how offensive or humorous these ironic utterances are, Okamoto stops short of offering any clear distinction of when and how *hiniku* can be offensive, humorous, or both. Indeed, he notes that the unclear relationship between *hiniku*, sarcasm, irony, and the other subcategories recognized by Gibbs (2000) such as understatement and hyperbole, are manifestly unclear.

Okamoto (2002) notes that *hiniku* sentences translated from English to Japanese are only successfully translated as ironic in Japanese if there is a target for the irony. If a comment such as “What lovely weather!” were translated into Japanese, even on an obviously rainy day, it would likely not translate correctly. Likewise, in the case of ironic criticism-as-praise, such as “You are so inconsiderate,” the irony would be lost in translation. This indicates that as a linguistic device that relies heavily on a target to be successfully interpreted, *hiniku* is likely not an appropriate translation for irony, and thus not the only term that should be considered in investigating the role irony plays in Japanese conversation.

Okamoto (2007) refines what pragmatic cues for irony exist outside of inappropriate levels of politeness; namely, what cues of pragmatic insincerity exist in Japanese, and what pragmatic cues exist to allude to a speaker’s negative attitude or evaluation. His list of pragmatic cues, delivered in 2 groups, is the result of an analysis of a corpus of written Japanese articles and novels, comics, news programs, and TV dramas.

Okamoto (2007), like Utsumi (1997) and Kihara (2005), draws a distinction between situational and verbal irony, the main distinguishing factor being that while both types of irony involve an incongruence between statement and reality or statement and intent, situational irony will lack any negative evaluation or criticism of a specific target. Okamoto chooses to discard situational irony and focus specifically on instances of verbal irony within the corpus, and the resulting list of major categories of irony based

on the pragmatic insincerity and the negative evaluation of irony were organized into a longer and far more comprehensive list than that designed by Tsutsui (1989).

(9)

Reversals

A. Reversals in Assertives

Insincere or mock praise

B. Reversals in Non-Assertives

Insincere thanks, greetings, advice

Non-Reversals

1. Infelicitous speech acts

C. Infelicitous Questions

D. Unrealistic assumptions

2. Interpretation of situations

E. Juxtaposition of two events

F. Various interpretations of situations

3. Mode of Expressions

G. Rhetorical techniques

H. Inappropriate Style

I. Replacement

J. Echoing

K. Non-verbal Techniques

(L. No Insincerity)

Okamoto (2007) provides more detailed subcategories for several of these, for example “Infelicitous Questions” involve subgroups such as infelicitous WH-questions, questions with obvious affirmative answers and questions with obvious negative answers, but for the purposes of this study, the main categories are the most salient to the analysis of data. The category arrangement breaks down to verbal features in all Reversals, with groups C through J featuring verbal cues in Non-Reversals, and the final group referring to non-verbal features (tone of voice, facial expression).

Okamoto (2007) explains that what he calls communicative insincerity (very closely related to pragmatic insincerity) is key in generating ironic statements in reversals and non-reversals in that the insincerely positive tone of reversals would be impossible to understand as ironic without the cue of pragmatic insincerity, whereas in non-reversals, this insincerity is not needed to know that speaker is being falsely positive, but it “generate[s] a *hiniku*-like tone” (Okamoto, 2007: 1161). However, Okamoto (2007) returns to the conclusions of Okamoto (2002) and the closing comments of Tsutsui (1989) in positing that irony, or *hiniku*, may not always be inherently critical or negative in message.

Okamoto (2007) argues that irony, here inadequately translated as *hiniku*, must be negative or critical, otherwise the statements of verbal or nonverbal insincerity create a “non-serious atmosphere only” (Okamoto, 2007: 1163). Though not explicitly stated, perhaps this condition of negative or critical evaluation arises from earlier studies citing praise-by-blame type irony (ironically critical statements) and irony without a clear target (“what nice weather”) were not generally perceived as *hiniku* statements for lack of a specific target, specifically for criticism. So it may be prudent to formally place distance between the terms irony and *hiniku*, and re-evaluate the relationship between a “non-serious” atmosphere and irony. Ultimately, if *hiniku* is known to have a closer association with sarcasm, then Okamoto’s findings make more sense due to three factors: firstly, Okamoto (2002) and (2007) found instances of *hiniku* which were judged both critical and humorous, much like findings on sarcasm in English (Gibbs, 2000). Secondly, even if most *hiniku* statements require a specific target for criticism, English studies make similar conclusions of sarcasm while still finding irony to be an overarching category capable of humor without blame or negative attitude (). Finally Okamoto (2007) sites instances of *hiniku* statements bearing no perceivable critical attitude, but has no alternative explanation for how these statements can be *hiniku* without being critical.

Studies such as Tsutsui (1989), Okamoto (2002) and Okamoto (2007) are extremely helpful in delineating the pragmatic means by which irony can be produced in Japanese, and how these forms can sometimes mirror and sometimes deviate from the forms found in English, yet in connecting the English term irony with the Japanese term

hiniku, the studies fail to take interest in instances of irony which are not critical (in fact, Okamoto (2007) flatly denies these types of utterances to be ironic despite evidence to the contrary).

2.4.3 Irony in Japanese: Functions

A series of studies by Nakamura (2009, 2011) examine how irony is used in Japanese with regard to criticism or complement. Nakamura (2009) investigated responses to irony through a series of studies employing participant responses to researcher-generated scenarios. The participants in the study were 76 native Japanese college freshmen who were given a total of 40 scenarios to read, including 6 scenarios with both an ironic type and a literal type of criticism, the ironic type further subdivided into 2 different types: criticism from a superior and criticism from an equal. Four other scenarios contained praise, one ironic and one literal for each, with the ironic types further subdivided into ironic praise which echoed a previous statement, and ironic praise which was self-generated by the speaker. The scenarios were modeled after those used in Dews et al. (1995), with the study participants rating the ironic comments for how ironic, how humorous, and how natural they sounded on a 7-point scale (1 being very natural and 7 being very un-natural). Finally, for the ironic complements only, participants were asked to write down why they thought the speaker had used an ironic comment. Examples of ironic and literal criticism and praise respectively can be found in (10) and (11) below:

- (10) a. *Daigakusei no Yamada-kun ha itsumo jugyou wo sabotte bakari de, tamani jugyou ni shusseki shitemo tomodachi to fuzakete bakari imasu. Sono jugyou no kyojuu ha kare ga yoku shitteiru sensei desu. Sensei ha kare ni mukatte kou iimashita. "Yamadakun ha, hontou ni sabori ga ooi ne."*

College student Yamada-kun often misses class, and on the occasion that he attends, spends class time goofing off with his friends. The professor knows him well. The professor says this to him: "Mr. Yamada, you really do miss a lot of classes."

- b. *Daigakusei no Yamada-kun ha itsumo jugyou wo sabotte bakari de, tamani jugyou ni shusseki shitemo tomodachi to fuzakete bakari imasu. Sono jugyou no kyojuu ha kare ga yoku shitteiru sensei desu. Sensei ha kare ni mukatte kou iimashita: "Yamada-kun ha, honto ni shinmenmoku da nee."*

College student Yamada-kun often misses class, and on the occasion that he attends, spends class time goofing off with his friends. The professor knows him well. The professor says this to him: "Mr. Yamada, you are so diligent."

- (11) a. *Sanae no oishii ryouri ga mina ni daikouhyou no naka, nakama no Hiro ga, "honto, Sanae ha ryouri ga heta da yo naa." To iu.*

Sanae's delicious cooking is a hit with everyone, and her friend Hiro says, "Sanae, your cooking really is terrible."

- b. *Watashi ha ryouri ga sugoku heta na no ... to itte ita Sanae no oishii ryouri ga mina ni daikouhyou no naka, nakama no Hiro ga "honto, Sanae ha ryouri ga heta da yo naa." To iu.*

"I'm pretty bad at cooking," says Sanae about her own well-received and delicious cooking, and her friend Hiro says, "really, Sanae your cooking is terrible."

Interestingly, and against the Tinge Hypothesis, ironic criticism was judged to be as hurtful as or more hurtful than direct criticism by the study participants, although it was better received when coming from a superior such as a teacher or coach, possibly because they were noted to be close to the listener and "friendly." Nakamura suggests that the difference in reception of ironic criticism from superiors to people of equal rank arises from the desire in Japanese society to take care of each other's feelings and not

insult each other when speaking to friends and those of the same hierarchical status, thus making irony a linguistic strategy to avoid rather than employ. Furthermore, Nakamura notes that ironic complements were interpreted as “joking,” “jocular,” and “jealousness” rather than irony or complement, and even then were only interpreted when accompanied by a previous statement that the comment echoed. Otherwise participants could not interpret the meaning behind an ironic complement. While Nakamura notes that the participants in the study marked ironic complements as confusing to understand, but more humorous or joking, she assumes that these complements were identified as such due to two factors: the shock (in her words *ooki na odoroki*: great shock) of seeing criticism where a complement is expected, plus the seemingly bizarre answer that is incongruous to the situation (in her words *joukyou ni awanai toppi na hentou*) would mean that the comment is connected to making fun or jocular (fuzaketeiru to iu *joukyou*).

Nakamura (2011) further investigates the frequency and type of irony found in Japanese conversation via open discourse completion tests conducted with 74 native Japanese university freshmen. These open-discourse surveys were also modeled after Kumon-Nakamura et al (1995), and also utilized examples of irony pulled from Hollywood movies. The scenarios ranged from a series of unmet expectations including unfulfilled requests, impolite or unfair requests from the listener, unexpected bad weather, tardiness, and rudeness to simply undesired situations such as bad weather or invitations to uninteresting events, to situations that imply the use of ironic complement, such as when a friend who professes some ill capability is in fact very good at some specific task. In the analysis of the data, Nakamura labeled about 5 different types of responses to the written scenarios based on similarity of responses and written paralinguistic cues such as facial expression or laughter. Nakamura found that less than 1% of responses contained ironic statements, and in a follow-up test involving evaluation of ironic discourse, found that many respondents did not understand the intent of ironic remarks.

However, within the analysis lies a key problem in labeling or identifying irony. While Utsumi (1997)’s implicit display theory offers a clear 3-point list of necessary conditions of irony, and Tsutsui () offers the likeliest pragmatic cues of irony in Japanese,

Nakamura (2009) and (2011) are quick to dismiss any comments containing no implied negative criticism. As an example of this, one scenario of the discourse completion test involves having a fellow member of an extracurricular club remark of your poor painting skills as you create a poster promoting the club: “Ok, Picasso, good luck!” (*jaa, Picasso, ganbatte ne!*). Nakamura notes several responses to this scenario:

(12) *arigatou*

Thanks.

(13) *ganbacchau yo, arigatou.*

I’ll do my best, thanks.

(14) *Picasso ganbarimasu! (sukoshi aite no choushi ni awasete agete, issho ni mori agareru you ni shitai)*

Picasso will do his best! (With a slight nod at following the speaker’s attitude, to better get excited)

(15) *Makasenasai! Kono hensei no Picasso ni!*

Leave it to this modern Picasso!

(16) *Gohho ganbaru yo!*

Van Gogh will do his best!

Nakamura notes in these responses no instance of an ironic thanks so often seen in English discourse, and labels all of these as examples of sincere responses, yet even with the knowledge of the desired use of irony, this researcher fails to see in this particular scenario where irony would be most appropriate. Nakamura (2009) notes that irony is less likely among equals in Japanese than in other situations, and in a club atmosphere composed of equals who, she notes in her previous study, conversation hinges on avoiding any slight to the conversational participants, any ironic response to being

essentially called out for being a terrible artist in itself a very sarcastic-sounding remark (i.e. being called Picasso when one is known for having below-average artistic skills) would seem hostile. On the other hand, if the original comment was meant as a humorous form of irony intended to lessen the blow of what would otherwise be a criticism of poor art skills, then (15) and (16) would seem to demonstrate what Jorgenson and Gibbs among others have noted as a participatory form of ironic discourse, where the listener shares in the ironic pretense (in this case, that the listener has amazing artistic skills) as a form of participating in humorous banter or teasing in a self-deprecating manner.

Such an example typifies the shortcomings of discourse completion tests and researcher-generated ironic scenarios: on the one hand it assumes a situation in which irony is likely to occur based on the researcher's own experience or understanding of irony, while on the other it assumes the test participant will read the ironic intent of the speaker's remark successfully. If, for example, as a member of a club volunteering to draw a poster, one were informed by one's club-mate that they were "Picasso" in an ironic sense, and if it is accepted that irony is necessarily negative in attitude, then one would have to understand the speaker to be intentionally insulting someone who is volunteering to draw a poster for the sake of the club, which to say the least would sound aggressive and not entirely conducive to a positive club dynamic. In this case it would be difficult to know whether to read the comment as hostile or friendly. Indeed, if as Tsutsui (1989) points out some forms of irony are unreadable depending specifically on the speaker's intention rather than the listener's comprehension, then a textoid or written conversation would be even more difficult to comprehend. If one follows the theory that irony is created to either enhance or diminish criticism based on the context, it is again impossible to gauge from a written text to what end the speaker is using an ironic comment, perhaps especially so if study participants have not been cued to the fact that it is the irony itself that needs consideration.

While Nakamura concludes that these scenario responses from test participants indicate that irony is extremely rare as a linguistic strategy in Japanese, they seem even more indicative of the limitations of discourse tests. It is more difficult to judge the context or motivations that create an ironic comment in a written scenario, as it is also

difficult to signal irony as a form of banter or humor versus a form of criticism.

Furthermore, in dismissing any possible cases of irony for their lack of implied negative attitude, Nakamura limits her search for irony into a more narrow focus than the term itself has been found to encompass.

In finding that students would interpret ironic criticism as “white lies” and that students would choose sincere encouragement over ironic praise when confronted with a failed expectation speaks more to the potential differences in when and where irony use is appropriate in Japanese than its likelihood of being used. As Okamoto (2002, 2007) and Tsutsui (1989) found, it is unlikely that irony will be easily recognized or used in Japanese (as it is in English) when a clear target is not present, findings which are supported in Nakamura (2009) and (2011). However, little account seems to be taken in Nakamura’s studies of the different pragmatic cues that signal irony in Japanese, nor the role that irony plays as a tool for humor rather than criticism.

As has been amply noted (Eisterhold et al., 2006; Reyes, 2012; Simpson, 2011; Boxer, 2002; Gibbs, 2000; Hirsch, 2011), the relationship between irony and humor production appears to be one of significant overlap, although obviously not all humor is ironic, and not all irony is humorous. However, the overlap between them is frequent enough that the context and conditions in which irony occurs likely has strong relation to the context in which humor can occur. Eisterhold et al (2006) found that social relationships, based on a continuum, can run from intimates (family, close friends) to acquaintances (teacher/student, coworkers, boss/employee relationships, peers), and strangers, and that irony is more common among intimates and acquaintances (highest frequency being among acquaintances), and was not common among strangers, which contradicts somewhat with the use of humor, which can span social relationships and is acceptable in almost any situation (Takekuro, 2006).

Contrastively, in a study investigating the differences in conversational humor in Japanese and English, Takekuro (2006) found that use of humor in Japanese also related to a social continuum from *uchi*, or inside, to *soto*, or outside, to *yoso*, or peripheral relationships. The three categories have rough equivalents with Eisterhold et al. (2006)’s three categories, but Takekuro found that humor, and conversational joking in particular,

was highly restricted to the intimates (*uchi*) category, never being used in more formal situations. This analysis was carried out through observing instances of conversational joking in Japanese movies and TV shows and American movies, as well as 2 hours of recorded conversations between friends in both Japanese and English. The method for choosing movie and TV show selection expressly avoided any TV show or movie that was primarily meant to be humorous, as data was meant to be reflective of occurrences of joking in normal conversations.

Takekuro (2006) claims that Japanese joking is constrained by cultural preference to intimates, even in relaxed settings, and in analysis of both recorded conversation and data culled from movies, concluded that Japanese tend to use “word-bounded” rhetoric; restricting jokes to topics already covered in the conversation. In terms of the overlap of humor and irony in Japanese conversation, this delineation is interesting in that most if not all forms of irony have been argued to be echoic in nature, even if this notion of echo can be broad, it certainly includes irony that specifically refers to previous elements of a conversation. If, indeed, so much of irony is contextually informed, and if the context itself is heavily culturally dependent, then it would not be surprising if irony would be produced and used in different ways in Japanese. If conversational joking is indeed bounded in the rhetoric of the conversation at hand, it might be likelier that echoic forms of irony are more common than other forms, and that the nature of that echo would be more bound to previous statements than the more nebulous notion of echoed beliefs or knowledge, unless of course speaker and listener share a rich background of shared experience.

Takekuro’s findings reflect those of Esiterhold et al (2006) in that in both Japanese and English, it is likelier that irony as humor is more often used among close friends and family than among strangers or even acquaintances. Nevertheless, the question of whether or not irony can be used humorously in Japanese has never been a focus of study.

Summary

Chapter two established the main terminology of this paper while also exploring the major theories contributing to the understanding of both how irony is defined, how it is produced, and how it is used in conversation. It first focused on the definition of irony and related definitions associated with irony production and identification, then discussed how this definition and the theories associated with how irony is used in conversation have changed over time to arrive at a current understanding of irony as multifaceted, with varying impacts and forms of production that are informed by the speaker-listener relationship, the context of the conversation, and the cultural background. Next, I examined how the definition of irony in Japanese is associated with and made distinct from the Japanese term *hiniku* and the reasons why these terms are similar but incompatible. After discussing the major studies outlining the categories of pragmatically-cued irony production in Japanese, I discussed the shortcomings of the research into irony in Japanese conversation based on three main issues: the style of research, the definition of irony with regard to *hiniku*, and the association with ironic utterances and negative evaluation. Finally, I compared the relationship between humor and irony and their use depending on social relationships in English and Japanese.

Chapter 3: Methodologies and Frameworks

3.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the methodology used in the study for identifying irony and breaking those identifying instances into categories of irony, including a closer examination of the pragmatic categories of irony outlined by Okamoto (2007) and Tsutsui (1989). This chapter will also briefly examine past approaches to the study of irony, problems, and solutions proposed in the method for this study. This discussion will also include a summary of types of data used in irony research and their respective strengths and weaknesses, and an overview of the types of data used here, reasons, participants, and settings. The amount of data collected and the organizational method is also discussed, and finally, this chapter discusses the reliability of the data and ethical issues involved in natural conversation recording. The final section of the chapter involves the transcript conventions used in the original Japanese conversations.

3.2 Methodological frameworks in previous irony research: elicited, natural, and combined data

The methodology for data collection in previous research has often relied on either elicited data in laboratory settings (Dews and Winner, 1995; Dews et al., 1995; Leggitt and Gibbs, 2011; Okamoto, 2002; Nakamura, 2009, 2011), recording naturally occurring or scripted conversation (Clift, 1999; Gibbs, 2000; Kotthoff, 2003), or a combination of the two (Jorgenson, 1996). Eliciting ironic responses with discourse completion surveys or through asking study participants to rate the appropriateness, criticism, humor, or other aspects of ironic utterances in written scenarios is considered useful in that it does not have to rely on simply hoping ironic utterances will not only occur in natural conversation, but also occur frequently enough to give insight into its use. On the other hand, elicited data has become less popular a method of data collection due to criticism that ironic utterances designed or elicited through written discourse surveys limit the focus of the function of irony to one or a few specific functions, and do not accurately

represent the full extent of how, when, and why irony is produced. Furthermore this approach is considered not reflective of natural talk and thus not an accurate portrayal of how irony is produced. Boxer (2002) summarizes these concerns in stating that asking participants to say what they would do rarely proves true in comparison to what people really do in a given situation.

Additionally, in creating questionnaires that attempt to elicit ironic comments from students, the researcher falls into a problem shared by many previous studies of irony based on laboratory-generated texts: verbal irony is likely best understood (both in how it is produced and how it is comprehended) in the context of a conversation, more than likely between intimates, and in ways beyond those means the researcher might specifically be targeting in the study. Thus, if Nakamura (2011) attempts to elicit ironic remarks in forms similar to those used in the English studies upon which she based her own questionnaire, then likely those results would not be replicated because, as a number of researchers have pointed out, irony production and impact are both reliant on the context of the conversation, the relationship of the participants, the and the cultural background of the language being used (Burgers et al., 2011; Eisterhold et al., 2006; Simpson, 2011; Gioria, 2011).

It is often considered useful in analysis of spoken language to triangulate data via a number of approaches, including analysis of recorded and transcribed data, ethnographic interviews with conversation participants after the fact to discern their motives and responses in recorded conversations, and questionnaires and textoids based on recorded data. This was the method chosen in Jorgenson. The most common approach to a more sociolinguistic review of irony in conversation would be an ethnography of communication approach, involving both analysis of recorded data and post-recording interviews with conversation participants (Boxer, 2002). Gibbs (2001) is a key example of research that has exploited recorded group conversation settings to capture the most natural image of irony in conversation.

There are drawbacks to recorded group conversation. Firstly, group recordings can incur transcription difficulties due to the quality of the recording and the amount of overlap between speakers. Additionally, group recordings with no researcher-led topic or

guidance may not contain the desired data, in this case, instances of irony. Irony is possibly rare enough in conversation that many hours of recordings would be necessary, resulting in a great deal of time-consuming work on the part of the researcher to transcribe. On the other hand, the advantages of group recordings are clear: participants may be more relaxed and natural in group settings than in interview or one-on-one situations, and thus are likelier to produce language more true to every day conversation than in other settings. Likewise in using unguided conversation, speakers will utilize the target language in a more natural way. Aside from Gibbs (2000) and the use of recorded conversation, other natural data used involve written data such as newspapers and literature (Okamoto, 2007; Hirsch, 2011), and movie and TV scripts (Nakamura, 2010; Takekuro, 2006).

Recording large numbers of spontaneous talk between friends is an onerous task for a single researcher chiefly because within hours of a given conversation irony is not guaranteed to arise, resulting in a tremendous amount of work in listening, transcribing, and translating conversations with little return of instances of irony. Alternatively, as Nakamura (2011) demonstrated, attempting to elicit data from participants may result in a narrow or skewed picture of how irony is used in conversation, a point which has been brought up in previous studies (). More troublingly, as the distinction between irony and *hiniku* and their applications in conversation are at best conflated and at worst ignored in linguistic research, there is likely little chance that native Japanese study participants would be capable of considering the definition and use of the term irony itself, and would likely consider it from the perspective of *hiniku*: as a particularly critical form of barb, rather than considering its possible role as joking or humor.

Thus for this study the methodology in collecting data involves recording and transcribing three types of Japanese conversation: recorded conversation between friends in a relaxed dinner setting, televised interviews between a television show host and his guests on a late-night interview program, and scripted television shows. The total data set is represented in the graph below.

Fig. 1: Total Number and Types of Data

Recorded Data	Length	Instances of irony
Conversation (dinners)	4 ½ hours	6
TV interviews Oshareism (3 episodes)	75 minutes	9
Field note comments		7
Scripted narration Shirushiru mishiru (3 episodes)	3 hours and 20 minutes	10
Scripted conversation 3 dramas	4.5 hours	15

Total Instances

47

3.3 Participants: Types of Data

3.3.1 Natural Conversation

The original participants in my study included a good friend I had made early on in my life in Sendai. The original intent had been to record a number of dinner conversations between families so as to capture several generations and family dynamics. However, as the focus of the research moved more specifically toward the role of irony and humor in Japanese conversation, and as the methodology evolved to include different types of conversation, the participants changed. For the recorded dinner conversations, the first recorded conversation was between myself and three Japanese friends, where I could be present for each exchange. Participants in this conversation included 2 female friends, aged 30 and 29, and one male friend, also 29, as well as myself. In observing how my close friend used humor in conversation, and discussed her work and home environments, I became interested in capturing these situations in recordings. I informed her that I wanted to observe Japanese conversation and how irony is used, gave her a recorder, and asked her to record several conversations over dinner.

The result was 3 different dinner conversations: one between herself and four coworkers, one between herself and three girlfriends, and one between herself and one female friend. A large portion of the dinner conversation between coworkers, as well as the entire conversation between girlfriends had to be discarded due to the poor quality of

the recording. However, after the batteries had been replaced and the recorder turned on for the last 20 minutes of the dinner with coworkers, this segment was more than 95% understandable, and this, as well as the conversation with one female friend, were subsequently transcribed.

My friend informed all participants in the conversation that their conversations would be used in my research and that they would remain anonymous, thus their first names only have been given. Conversation participants included a total of 5 women and 2 men, ranging in age from 29 to 32 years old. As this study does not aim to examine the role of age and gender in irony use, they are only noted in general terms, not as a contribution to the analysis.

Participants in the field notes include four native speaking classmates and one native speaking professor. The original intent of this study was not to use class conversations in data collection, but comments from the professor in opening conversations in class seemed to indicate the use of irony as a humor strategy by the professor when speaking to students, and in the interest of contributing to the study, the professors comments were written down as faithfully as possible and double-checked with one classmate after the class had ended. As the classmates had not been informed ahead of time that their comments would be recorded for research, classmates and professor were asked after-the-fact for consent to use their comments anonymously within the research data. I obtained oral consent only in all cases.

The other field notes include notations made of several comments by a friend while watching television, as well as one instance of a comment made by pro golfer Ishikawa Ryo while being interviewed after a golf tournament. The friend is a 30-year-old male native Japanese speaker who also gave oral consent to having his comments used as data. In all instances of field notes, the date and context of the utterances were noted, as well as the speakers, and all notes were checked with a native speaker, either the speaker his or herself or a native speaker present for the comment.

3.3.2 Televised interviews

The last form of unscripted conversation gathered for data came from the Sunday night interview program “Oshareism,” hosted by comedian Shinya Ueda, with different famous guests on each program interviewed about their personal and professional lives. A total of 3 episodes of approximately 25 minutes each were used in the data. The guests in the episodes used included Sho Sakurai from the popular boy band, Arashi, a group of four female idol singers from the eighties and nineties and their children, and finally the soccer star Yuuto Nagatomo.

On the assumption that recorded conversations would elicit few examples of irony, a second set of data involving interviews on the popular evening program “Oshareism” were used. Takekuro avoided explicitly humorous TV shows in an attempt to capture natural conversational joking in Japanese conversation, but this study is expressly concerned with seeing how irony and conversational joking can overlap in Japanese. To that end, the television show “Oshareism” was selected based on two factors: the host, Shinya Ueda, is an established comedian and conducts interviews to be informal and entertaining, and participants often build a temporary rapport with Ueda Shinya and his two cohosts through banter and conversational joking. Thus, with data rich in conversational joking, banter, and jocularity, the researcher hoped to get more specific examples of how humor and irony overlap.

3.3.3 Scripted Television

The recorded TV shows involved three different TV dramas chosen for their reputation or peer reviews as being witty, with sarcastic, witty, or ironic banter specifically being mentioned. “Kimi wa Petto” (“You Are My Pet”), a 10 episode drama series from 2003 based on a manga of the same name, features a main character considered sharp and acidic in personality. “Fukigen na Gene” (“Moody Gene”) is a play on words between the scientific term “gene” and the nickname of the main character, Yoshiko, which can also be read as Jinko (gene-ko). The 11-episode drama was chosen based on online peer reviews describing the dialogues as witty and sarcastic. Finally, the 2005, 10-episode “Love Shuffle” was chosen because of its all-adult cast and story

premise based on swapping couples, which seemed a playful enough premise to contain humorous conversation.

However, as the genre of “drama” implies, Japanese TV dramas tend more heavily toward deepening plots and progressively serious scenarios and conversations that lend little opportunity for humorous banter. Thus, only dialogue from the first three episodes of each drama, where a large amount of the exposition and more light conversation took place, was used as data.

The other scripted television used in the data came from the nighttime variety show “Shirushiru Mishiru Sunday,” a television show hosted by comedian Ueda Shinya that often includes tours through the production process of various famous or popular commodities including food, clothes, and machines.

3.4 Data Analysis: identifying irony

Though this was addressed in Chapter 2, I will briefly revisit the cues generally understood to be necessary in order to identify a comment as ironic. According to the Allusional Pretense and Implicit Display theories of irony, the three necessary conditions for creating an ironic statement are:

1. A violated expectation on the part of the speaker
2. This expectation is signaled through either echo, pretense, and/or cues of pragmatic insincerity (K-N, 1995) such as violated Gricean Maxims, over-politeness, or common cues such as hyperbole, understatement, and rhetorical questions.
3. These cues help to also signal an unspoken criticism on the part of the speaker toward either the listener or the unmet expectations

Gibbs argues that in order to produce irony, a critical or negative evaluation is common, but not necessary, and the notion that irony is not always inherently critical is bolstered in previous studies (Colston, Simpson, Boxer, Kotthoff, Clift). Thus, the final condition of identifying irony is altered slightly:

3. Through echoic, pretense, and pragmatic insincerity, the speaker expresses some attitude toward the event being highlighted.

While these pragmatic cues of irony in English have been found to include pragmatic insincerity in the form of hyperbole, rhetorical question, understatement and sarcasm (Hirsch, 2011; Kreuz, 2000; Gibbs, 2000), Okamoto (2007) notes an exhaustive list of cues through which pragmatic insincerity may be signaled in Japanese. This study will observe which of the

As both Tsutsui (1989) and Okamoto (2007) employed the term *hiniku* as the Japanese equivalent of “irony,” and as this has been found to be more closely related in use and effect to sarcasm, and as both studies also applied the condition of negative evaluation or criticism to the identification of ironic utterances, this study will use the pragmatic cues set forth in Okamoto (2007), but will discard the prerequisite of specifically negative evaluation or presence of an identifiable target for irony. In identifying sarcasm as the English counterpart to *hiniku*, this study will treat those ironies containing a specific target for criticism as instances of sarcastic irony, other types of irony being identified by an implied attitude, but not necessarily a negative attitude or criticism.

3.5 Transcript Conventions

The following transcript conventions were adopted:

[laughs]	Paralinguistic features, descriptive information
(.)	Brief pause
+	Pause of up to one second
...//... \..	Simultaneous speech, interrupted (overlapped) speech
.../.....\\	Interrupting (overlapping) speech
(hello)	Transcriber’s best guess at an unclear sentence
()	Indecipherable speech

serv- Incomplete for cutoff utterance
... Trailing off

Summary

Chapter 3 discussed the methodology for this study, including what type of data was collected and why, as well as discussion of study participants. In this study, participants include both conversation participants in recorded natural conversation as well as television hosts and guests participating in an interview-format show. Additionally, scripted data from television shows was also gathered. This chapter also reviewed the identifying markers of irony used to locate ironic utterances in the data, and finally included a list of transcript conventions used in translating Japanese text to English.

Chapter 4: Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the data collected and analyzes it based on the research questions posited in Chapter 1. First, there is a discussion of the pragmatic cues observed in the data and how they related to the cues discussed in Okamoto (2007) and, by extension, Tsutsui (1989). The second research question is addressed in a brief analysis of how conversational joking in the form of teasing, self-deprecation, and teasing or mocking absent others was created with irony. Within the discussion of conversational joking, Question 3 on the role of sarcasm to mock and criticize or be humorous and dilute criticism is also addressed.

4.2 Instances of Irony

In total, 47 instances of irony were collected across all data: televised interviews, field notes, dinner conversations, scripted television, and field notes, their numbers according to type of data summarized in (1) below

(1)	<i>Instances of irony</i>	
	Scripted Dramas	15 Total
	<i>Love Shuffle</i>	
	Episode 1.....	2
	Episode 2.....	0
	Episode 3.....	4
	<i>You are my Pet</i>	
	Episode 1.....	3
	Episode 2.....	2
	Episode 3.....	1
	<i>Moody Gene</i>	
	Episode 1.....	1

Episode 2.....	1
Episode 3.....	1
Scripted TV	8 Total
<i>Shirushiru Mishiru Sunday</i>	
5/20	2
9/24 1.5 hour	5
10/7.....	1
Natural Conversation	12 Total
20 minutes, 5 people.....	2
2 hours, 4 people.....	2
2 ½ hours, 2 people.....	2
field notes.....	6
Interviews	12 Total
Nagatomo Oshareism.....	3
Sakurai Oshareism.....	4
Families Oshareism.....	4
field note.....	1
Total.....	47 instances

The instances of irony captured may not constitute the total number that occurred, but in several reviews of the data, borderline cases of irony which demonstrated teasing and possibly even indirect speech, but not necessarily an implied attitude, were rejected. Example (2) from the September 24 episode of “Shirushiru Mishiru Sunday” demonstrates such ultimately rejected cases.

(2)

Nanika no techigai de konna yatsu ga kiteshimatta.

Nadeshiko Japan, Miyama Aya naranu, Ayaman Japan, ayaman () hissho.

Shoujiki, roke chuushi mo kangaeta ga,

Totetsu mo nai katanazukuri shokunin wo mataseteiru no de, tonikaku mukau koto ni.

Through some mistake, we ended up with her.

Not Nadeshiko Japan's Miyama Aya, but Ayaman Japan reporter ().

Truth be told, we considered cancelling the segment.

But as our extraordinary sword maker was waiting, we figured we'd push on ahead.

In this television show, both regular contributors and guests act as reporters that guide viewers through the particular event or behind the scenes tour of the current episode's central product. One segment of this particular episode featured a look at how Japanese swords are created. In this example, the narrator implies that the current reporter assigned to visit this sword-maker, one member of a three-woman comedy set, AyamanJapan, was not the desired choice of reporter. As noted, the original choice, a member of Japan's popular national women's soccer team, was the original reporter, but through scheduling problems, could not do the job. It is difficult to tell whether or not the show is serious in its stated disappointment with the substitute reporter, however, while the phrase, "truth be told, we considered cancelling the segment" is jocular in nature, poking fun at the discrepancy in popularity between the member of a comedy group and the member of a beloved national team, it does not seem to invoke an evaluation or attitude, so much as state the evaluation baldly.

The 47 examples of irony gathered were gathered on the condition that they displayed indirect speech, pragmatic insincerity, and an implied attitude contained within the pragmatic insincerity. Within the data itself, it could be said that borderline cases of irony exist, in which it is up to interpretation how ironic a comment may be. But this would be natural for irony, for as Tsutsui (1989) notes, irony is largely dependent on speaker intent, and may sometimes be intentionally difficult to interpret as irony.

4.2.1 Pragmatic Cues in the Data

As stated in Chapter 2, Okamoto (2007) set out a detailed list of ways in which pragmatic insincerity could be cued in Japanese. This was an expansion on a more succinct list from

Tsutsui (1989) which marked major pragmatic cues of irony as describing an event literally, describing an event with positive evaluation, inquiring whether the situation is actually happening, describing a contrasting event which has the same evaluation as the actual event, and juxtaposing situations. In analyzing the 47 instances of irony found within the data, it became clear that as pragmatic cues do experience overlap, it was easiest to assign ironic utterances to places within Okamoto (2007)'s list to best see the global picture of pragmatic cues present.

Okamoto divides these cues into two major groups: Reversals (subdivided into assertives and non-assertives) and Non-Reversals (subdivided into three main groups outlined below). Reversals he classifies as the traditional form of irony: insincere thanks, praise, or sympathy. Non-Reversals are those forms of irony that are not understood through considering the opposite meaning of the statement. Each of these groups receives a more detailed and expanded list of pragmatic cues similar to but far more detailed than the five basic types of cues offered by Tsutsui (1989). A summarized version of his list is written below, with pragmatic cues simplified or combined based on what was seen in the data and for the sake of brevity:

Some of these cues often overlap with each other – rhetorical questions, for example, can echo previous statements or situations that are recalled in the form of a question, for example.

Likewise, what Okamoto (2007) describes as rhetorical techniques could be simplified to basic understatement, but also involves invoking clichés or metaphors to underscore the ironic statement. Similarly, one could argue that understatement and inappropriate style might be considered two types of rhetorical techniques, but for the sake of better capturing the overall cues observed in the data, it seemed prudent to follow Okamoto (2007)'s example in stratifying these types of cues based on each example. Because of this aforementioned overlap in use of cues, however, the numbers above include single examples of irony included in two different pragmatic cues. Example (1) includes the summarized list of observed pragmatic cues, as well as

(3)

1. Insincere or mock praise (7 instances)
2. Insincere thanks, greeting, advice, or apology (3 instances)
3. Rhetorical Questions (7 instances)
4. Unrealistic interpretations of situations (8 instances)
5. Understatement, hyperbole (Rhetorical techniques) (7 instances)
6. Ironically literal interpretation (5 instances)
7. Inappropriate style or register (including politeness level) (7 instances)
8. Echoing (6 instances)

It was difficult to reduce cases of pretense, wherein the speaker was saying something not echoic, but not sincere, into the categories of pragmatic insincerity. Ultimately, several cases where pretense was a more appropriate marker than, for example, in appropriate style, were additionally marked as “pretense,” but as the list of cues above denote various forms to pretend sincerity, it is not marked as a category here.

Insincere or mock Praise

Insincere or mock praise was observed in several cases where teasing tended closer toward mocking, as in the case of (4) and (5) below.

(4)

U: *Dou ka na, kyou no kono ishou? Ima kara joshidai de kaiyougaku no rekushaa nan da. Munamoto, hirakisugi ka na? Ganbatte wakabutte shippai shiteiru dasai otona ni dake ha miraretakunai.*

Y: *Ii to omoimasu yo, tekido ni ojisan ppokute.*

U: *Kimi no sono ishou koso, tomu sooya ka nani ka na no ka na?*

Y: *Sagyougi desu! kore kara fiirudo de konchuusaishu –*

U: *Moushikashite yaiteru?*

Y: *Hai?*

U: *Kanojo ha daigaku jidai kara no yuujin da yo! Uzura no mesu ha uzura no osu ni hoka no uzura no mesu ga kuru to kyuu ni sono uzura no osu ni shuuchaku shihajimeru*

U: How do I look today? I'm giving an oceanography lecture at a women's college. Too many buttons undone at the neck? I'm trying to look young and hip, but I just don't want to look like some old fogey.

Y: I think it looks good, **just right for a moderately old man.**

U: **And how about you with your clothes, what are you, Tom Sawyer?**

Y: These are work clothes! I'm about to do field collection of insects.

U: Could it be that you are jealous?

Y: What?

U: She's just a friend from college! When the female partridge sees any other female approach her mate she starts to attack.

(“Moody Gene”, episode 1)

In this situation, Y and U are estranged lovers, Y unwillingly reunited with U through working at the same university together. In her praise of his looking good “for a moderately old man,” Y's praise becomes insincere by contrasting the desired praise with the stated praise. Similarly in (5), U is confronted by his ex-wife, W, for cheating on him during their marriage.

(5)

W: *Uso yo! Anna ni onna no ie tomatetari aruitetari kuse ni!*

U: *Sonna koto ichido mo shitenai.*

W: *Shiteta janai!*

U: *Ichido mo shitenai to wa iwanai. Demo honto ni isogashikatan da! Sore ni ano koro no kurou wo kakete ima no ore ga aru no*

W: ***Sore ha sore ha gorippa desu koto.***

U: *Kimi wo omotteta*

W: *Watashi ha kirai datta. Tabekata mo ofuro ni hairukoto mo kagu no okikata mo, myouji datte don don kirai ni natta.*

W: Liar! After all the women you ran around with!

U: I never did that!

W: You did!

U: I won't say that I NEVER did. But I really was busy!

And anyway it was all that hard work and suffering that made me who I am today!

W: **Oh well how wonderful for you.**

U: I cared for you!

W: I hated it. The way you ate, the way you took a bath, the way you arranged the furniture, even your last name, I hated all of it.

(“Moody Gene,” episode 3)

In this example, the praise is signaled as insincere through both the contrast with the context of the conversation as well as the wife's clear negative attitude toward their married life. Additionally, her tone of voice may also have provided a prosodic cue that her meaning was insincere, but context between the two speakers provides more than ample cues to her pragmatic insincerity.

Insincere thanks, greeting, advice, or apology

The three instances of insincere thanks, greetings, or apology are listed below in (6), (7), and (8). Example (4) pertains to a late-night call S is making to her friend, Y, for advice on her dating life. In seeking advice, her friend's brief, blunt thoughts followed by killing the phone call insinuate a lack of satisfaction with the exchange on S's part, rendering her thanks insincere. Likewise, in (7), the same friends are discussing S's inherent lack of confidence around men. When Y informs S, again bluntly, that her concern with her own cool image is unattractive, S replies with an insincere, “I'm so sorry.” What in particular cues this as ironic apology rather than sincere apology? In the

context of the conversation, when one is insulted, particularly by a friend, one does usually not respond by apologizing. In doing so, S, signals her displeasure with being dismissed as unattractive by her friend, the apology creating the gap between her stated reaction and her attitude toward her friend's advice.

(6)

S: *Moshimoshi, Yurichan, ima ii?*

Y: *Yokunai. Temijika ni.*

S: *Wakatta. Honjitsu gogo nijuuichiji goro, hatsu deeto Hasumisenpai ga ie made okutte kurete, tsukiatte kure to kokuhaku sarete.*

Y: *Ano sa, noroke dattara mata ashita yukkuri kiku kara.*

S: *Chigauno, sore Momo ni miraretano! Momo ttara nanka sugoi sunechatte.*

Y: *Sutenasai yo, kareshi ga dekitan dattara.*

S: *Eh? Datte, kareshi to petto ha betsumon dashi.*

Y: *Anta ie no petto ha hitoka no osu deshouga!*

[hangs up]

S: ***Temijikana kaitou arigatou.***

S: Hello, Yuri-chan, is now a good time?

Y: It is not. Keep it short.

S: Got it. Today at about 9 pm Hasumi and I went on our first date and he walked me home and asked if we could go steady.

Y: Um, if this is a relationship forum, I will listen very carefully tomorrow.

S: No no, Momo saw it happen! And now Momo is all jealous.

Y: Get rid of him, you've got a boyfriend now.

S: Eh? But boyfriends and pets are separate things.

Y: The pet in your house is a human male!

[hangs up]

S: **Thanks for keeping it short.**

("You Are My Pet", episode 3)

(7)

S: *Hanashitakatta no yo. Demo, hora, watashi tte furiitooku nigate da shi.*
Kyuu dattara meiku amai no mo ki ni natte
Sorene, hisashiburi ni aeta no ni, kakko warui koto ga miraretakunai shi.

Y: *Hora, mata kakko tsuke.*
Honto kawaikunai yo, sou iu koto.

S: ***Warukatta wa ne.***

Y: *Sore ni ittoku kedo, otoko tte nowa,*
Kakkoyokute yuushuu na onna nanka yori tashoo azatokutemo chotto
obaka de suki ga atte hera hera waratte ruyou na onna ga sukinano.

S: *Ima no serifu mukatsuku.*

Y: *Jijitsu dakara desho?*

S: I wanted to talk to him. But, see, I've always been bad at free talk. And if it's sudden I worry about how my make-up looks, and I don't want to look stupid.

Y: Ah, see, worrying about your image again.
That kind of thing is really unattractive.

S: **I'm so sorry.**

Y: And I'll tell you, boys,
Rather than wanting girls who are cool and smart prefer women who are kind of dumb and airheaded, the kind that giggle at everything.

S: That talk pisses me off.

Y: Probably because it's true.

(“You Are My Pet,” episode 2)

(8)

A: *Oojiro, anta saitei da yo. Watashi ga deatta jinsei saitei otoko ranku,*
nanbaa wan da!

O: (clapping) *Omedetou! Ah, sou kai. Anta ha futari socchi no mikata kai. Jaa, nakayoku paatii wo suzukete cho. Jaa na.*

A: Oojiro, you are the worst. Of all the terrible men I have met in my life, you rank number 1!

O: [clapping] **Congratulations! Ah, I see! You two are on his side, huh. Ok, by all means enjoy the rest of your party. Tah tah.**

(“Love Shuffle,” episode 3)

Likewise, (8) is an insincere form of greeting (as well as being an ironically friendly register), because having just been accused of being the worst man in the world by friends, one of whom has accused him of sleeping with his ex-girlfriend, O’s insincere greeting, “tah tah,” invokes the friendliness the group regularly shares, in contrast to the current situation.

Rhetorical Questions

Rhetorical questions were also common, and used in a manner of contrasting the question with the obvious negative or positive answer, such as the case in (9), where Shinya Ueda, in asking his guest whether she belongs to a gossip magazine, is implicitly pointing out how ludicrous it is to ask someone about their private love life in such blunt terms. It is rhetorical in that an answer is clearly not expected, but it is also pretense in that it assumes the answer, and contrasts that expected answer against the guest’s behavior: Rhetorical questions often crossed boundaries into other categories, such as in (9), where the irony is signaled not only through the rhetorical question, but through the pretense of not knowing the answer to that question.

(9)

L: Ano, wakarechatta no?

N: Sou de...su.

L: Sou nan da!

N: Ma, iro iro...

U: Dare ga sonna kakushin ni serete itta!

[Laughter]

U: **Omae, asahi geinou ka?**

L: *Um, did you break up?*

N: *Ye...s, I did.*

L: *Oh, I see!*

N: *Well, this and that...*

U: *Who asks backstabbing questions like that!*

[Laughter]

U: ***What are you, part of Asahi Comedy?***

(Oshareism, Nagatomo)

Unrealistic interpretations of situations

Unrealistic interpretations of situations involved those situations in which the ironic comment clearly did not match the current situation. In fact, (9) could also be considered an example of an unrealistic interpretation in that asking someone if they belong to a comedy troupe would, if taken literally, be a large departure from the current conversation on failed relationships. Unrealistic interpretations are one category in Tsutsui (1989), while in Okamoto (2007) an approximation of this category exists as a subcategory to Reversals (“Interpretations of Situations”) which itself contains the subcategory “Various Interpretations of Situations.” For Okamoto (2007), these interpretations largely revolve around either obvious comments, or “distortion” of another speaker’s meaning or intention. The examples within the data for this research found “unrealistic” interpretations to conform most commonly with the latter interpretation style found in Okamoto (2007); statements which made no attempt to reflect an understanding of the current situation.

At times, as in (9), the interpretation was a bald misunderstanding within the given context. On the other hand, in situations such as (10) below, the interpretation is a contrast between the speaker's true feelings and the feelings her company might expect her to have.

(10)

A: *Nanka, watashi zuibun yasuku agerarechatteru mitai ne.*

K: *A, kimi ha ki toranai mise no hou ga suki ka to omotte. Iya nara deyou ka.*

A: *U::n, joudan, joudan.*

A: **I'm getting a pretty cheap reception, it seems.**

K: Ah, I thought maybe you'd prefer something in-austentacious. We can leave if you don't like it.

A: No, I'm just joking.

(“Love Shuffle,” episode 1)

The specific situation involves a cheap pub as a first date, which the speaker exploits to pretend dissatisfaction or assume some lack of real interest on her date's part. In saying something that implies her date's lack of attentiveness, the speaker is intentional, or born of disinterest. In truth, however, her intended meaning could be twofold: she is either praising his correct assumption that she would prefer a more rustic setting, and/or she is pointing out what might appear to be his nervousness regarding his restaurant choice. In either event, a literal interpretation is clearly not her goal, but rather she intends to tease through an implies message.

Rhetorical techniques

Rhetorical techniques such as understatement and hyperbole, as well as ironic literal interpretations are typified in (11), (12), and (13) respectively. In (11),

- (11) *Gangan tataite iku. Atsuku natta tama hagane wo tataku koto de, naka ni aru iou nado no fujunbutsu ga uki detekuru.*
Suru to koko de, ikinari mizu wo kakehajimeta.
Betsu ni kore, omoshirogatte Ayaman wo kyaa kyaa ni iwaseteiru wake de ha nai.

He continues pounding away. Through pounding on the heated ball of steel, the sulfur and other impure elements are removed.

And once this is done, suddenly he begins tossing water onto it.

This was not especially to make Ayaman scream.

(“Shirushiru Mishiru,” 9/24)

- (12) *Mochiron, roke basho mo saikou no yuuenchi wo youi shita. Sorega, Yomuri Rando.*

Of course, we have prepared the best amusement park for our shoot!

Which would be, Yomiuri Land.

(“Shirushiru Mishiru,” 5/20)

- (13) *Jiinzū no shuzai nanoni, suutsu de bacchiri kimetekita Yamashita hissho.*

Despite the fact that he is covering a story about jeans, here is reporter Yamashita in a well-tailored suit.

(“Shirushiru Mishiru,” 9/24)

In (11), the reporter’s sole reaction of observing a sword being made is to shriek when the sparks and hot water from the sword fly out, and could both be seen as indirectly teasing her for her lackluster reporting. Likewise in (12), the narrator appears to be making fun of the show’s own shooting location, as this voice-over occurs on

screen while a picture of a lack-luster, low-budget rural amusement park is juxtaposed with the music from Disney's Electric Street Parade. In this sense, the cues for insincerity might be considered prosodic as well in that the image and music help lend greater insincerity to the statement that the "best location" had been scouted.

Ironically literal interpretations

Finally, (13) was an example of an ironically literal interpretation of a situation. This particular pragmatic cue was noted in both Tsutsui (1989) and Okamoto (2007), and has a counterpart in English (Myers Roy, 1981). In terms of pragmatic insincerity, in this case the strictly literal, unnecessary reporting on what the reporter is wearing to the location, a jeans factory, borders on violating the Gricean Maxim of quality – say only what you need to say, but not more than that. The literal observation of the reporter's outfit in contrast to the location, then, implies a teasing judgment on the part of the narrator regarding why the reporter did not choose to wear jeans for this particular shoot.

Likewise, (14) is ironically literal in that the speaker, the class professor, in giving a direct and specific account of what is expected of students working on homework, implies the obviousness itself of the task -- a task so obvious that it should not require voicing.

(14) 11/14 Professor and Student

S1: *Sou desu ne. Boku mo kono eigo ga okashii na to omotta.*

Prof: ***Sou ne, hen da na to omou toki ni ha jibun de kangaeraarenakya naranai ne.***

[laughter]

S1: Yes, I also noticed that the English was strange here.

Prof: **Yes, that's right, and when you notice that something isn't right you must then consider on your own!**

Inappropriate style/register

Inappropriate style, or register, often in the form of unnaturally polite or impolite, friendly or condescending speech was also observed as a pragmatic cue for irony in the data. In the example of (15), the contrast between the familiar, conversational attitude in “I’m so glad to hear you’re doing better,” is opposed with the following comment, “Then get out.” Additionally, the appearance of soliciting opinions from the man S wants to leave in the form of “would you rather”, again contrasted with the already stated desire that he leave immediately, renders the tone of these comments, casual, inquisitive, friendly, insincere in the face of the first implied, then baldly stated message to get out immediately.

(15)

M: *Gochisousama deshita! Kore sugoi oishikatta.*

S: ***Sou? Genki ni natta mitai de yokatta.***

M: *Un! Okagesamade chou genki!*

S: ***Dattara detette.***

Soretmomo keisatsu ni renraku shita hou ga ii no kashira?

M: Thanks for the food. It was amazing!

S: **Oh? How good to see you’ve recovered.**

M: Yep, thanks to you I’m all better!

S: **Then get out.**

Or, would you rather I call the police?

(“You Are My Pet,” episode 1)

Finally, echoic cues in the data suggested that in fact echo is an important pragmatic cue of irony in conversation, at least in combination with an implied attitude. This is displayed in (16), as a resolution to the confrontation seen in (6), when it comes to light that O has done no wrong. In combining rhetorical question with echo, O creates a contrast between the current state of mea culpa in his friends with their earlier accusations, as well as implies a criticism of how late the apologies have come.

(16)

A & K: *O-chan, gomen!*

O: *Nande ayamaru no? Jinsei saitei ranku nanbaa wan no otoko ni?*

A: *A, sore wa!*

K: *Hidoi. Sonna koto iu ka, futsuu?*

A: *Anta okottan desho?*

O: *Itetete! Itai!*

K: *Mada itai no? Daijoubu? Itai no itai no, tondeke!*

A: *Daijoubu? Kokoro no itai no mo tondeke!*

A & K: O-chan, sorry!

O: **Why apologize? To the world's number one terrible man?**

A: Ah, about that!

K: Horrible! Would you say that, normally?

A: YOU were angry!

O: Owowowowow! That hurts!

K: Does it still hurt? Are you ok? Pain, pain, go away!

A: Are you OK? Pain of your heart, fly away!

(“Love Shuffle”, episode 3)

4.3 Conversational Joking and Irony

As Boxer (2002) notes, teasing is the only form of conversational joking capable of existing on a continuum from bonding speakers to hurting them. While it is possible for teasing to become mocking, and thus hurtful, it is in the form of teasing that irony is most likely to both be in some form negative or critical while also being humorous and inoffensive. In the scripted dramas, 10 of the utterances recorded were found to be sarcastic, although three of them appeared to also be more teasing and less overtly critical. In addition, only four of the utterances were found to be closer to teasing than overtly sarcastic, as in (17) below.

(17)

A: *Nanka, watashi zuibun yasuku agerarechatteru mitai ne.*

K: *A, kimi ha ki toranai mise no hou ga suki ka to omotte. Iya nara deyou ka.*

A: *U::n, joudan, joudan.*

A: **I'm getting a pretty cheap reception, it seems.**

K: Ah, I thought maybe you'd prefer something in-austentacious. We can leave if you don't like it.

A: No, I'm just joking,

(“Love Shuffle,” episode 3)

In (17), it appears that if anything, A is ironically expressing the opinion of most women at taking a first date to a dive bar, although more likely she is expressing her opinion more to rile K than to be ironic. Nevertheless, the lack of commitment to the statement, contrasted with her actual comfort in such areas, implies ironic criticism in the place of sincere praise. Other cases of irony in the scripted dramas leaned more heavily toward expressing criticism and negative opinions than in teasing or joking about absent others, however.

As for the scripted television in “Shirushiru Mishiru Sunday,” the data tended to express irony teasing the reporters and their appearance or actions, as seen in (11) (12) and (13) above.

The type of teasing observed in conversations, both in the interviews on TV and in the recorded dinner conversations, showed a diversion mainly in that teasing was more common in ironic form on television than in the dinner conversations. In the dinner conversations, conversational joking in the form of irony was more likely to take place as teasing or self-deprecating. Eight instances were found of conversations which were both self-deprecating and teasing, in a collaborative construction of humor, while only two instances of mocking an absent other were recorded. A typical example of both the self-deprecating/teasing irony and the mocking absent parties form of irony can be seen in (18) and (19).

- (18) Dinner, 2 people – rhetorical question, teasing/self-deprecating
- A: *Suraido shitari nobashitari.*
- Y: *A::*
- Y: *Uhahaha, tanoshi::! [laughs]*
- Y: *[laughs] demo, demo kou yatte nani mo konakattara chou hazukashii kara [laughs] Nani mo shinai! [laughs]*
- A: *[laughs] shikamo sa, kore tte sa, kou dake janakute, osaete kou yattemo --*
- Y: *Ikuhahahaha [laughs]*
Yondenai ne, zenzen.
- A: ***Itsu no jidai no hito mitai na!***
- Y: *U::! [laughs]*
- A: *U::! [laughs]*
- Y: ***Sumaho hajimete? Mitai na!*** [laughs]
- A: You can slide and stretch.
- Y: Ahh.
Uahaha! It's fun! [laughs]
[laughs] But, but, if I did this and nothing happened it would be so embarrassing! So [laughs] I wont try anything!
- A: *[laughs] And, right, this is, right, not just this, but also if you try pushing it like this...*
- Y: *It goe-hahahaha! [laughs]*
I'm not reading this at all!
- A: **What time period are you from!**
- Y: *Oooo! [laughs]*
- A: *Oooo! [laughs]*
- Y: **Is this your first time with a smart phone? Right?** [laughs]

In (18), the two women enjoying dinner are examining A's smartphone. Y has a regular cell phone, and is impressed by the internet access and other features of smartphones. In this exchange, where Y expresses surprise and glee at the sliding function of a

smartphone, is gently mocked for her enthusiasm by A. This phrase is ironic in A clearly knows which time period Y is from, and intends through the question to highlight the contrast between how a modern person *should* behave around a smartphone and how A is behaving. Nevertheless, the reaction of laughter and Y's ironic response indicate that she is aware of her own behavior, and the comments, both teasing and self-directed, are not taken seriously. Here, teasing runs close to mocking, but is nevertheless inoffensive.

(19) Dinner, 5 people – unrealistic interpretation / mocking an absent party

A: *Kore nani? Torenai.*

B: *Nani?*

C: *Nani nani?*

A: *Kuroi, ten ga hitte iru kedo.*

C: *Ten?*

Y: *Mushi?*

B: *Chotto yamete.*

[Laughter]

Y: *Nonjae, nonjae!*

[Laughter]

A: *Toreta yo!*

B: *Toreta!*

Y: *Shinanai shinanai. [laughs] Watashi nanka jitensha koideru toki yoku tabero yo, mushi.*

B: *Heso no goma tte ireta n desho?*

Y: *Kyahaha, kimochi warui!*

A: *Goma haitte iru.*

C: ***kawaii hito no ni haitteta kara***

B: ***//Un//***

C: ***// Yokatta ne.***

Y: ***// Rakkii.***

A: *Un, sou. // Demo tocchatta.*

C: // rakkii.

B: // rakkii.

Y: **mo//dosu?**

// rakkii //

D: *Kore, koko ni aru yo.*

B: *Ore ni, ore ni urami ga aru nara, sore de dou shita no?*

Nani?

Y: *So! no goma ja shinanai kara.*

[Laughter]

Daijoubu da yo

A: What is this? I can't get it off.

B: Wh//at?

C: //What, what?

A: There's a black (.) spot in here.

Y: An insect?

B: Please stop.

[Laughter]

Y: Drink it, drink it!

[Laughter]

A: I got it out!

B: You got it out!

Y: You won't die. (laughs) I've swallowed plenty before on my bike to work, bugs.

B: Didn't they just put in some belly button lint?

Y: Kihahaha, that's disgusting!

A: There's a sesame seed in there.

C: **They put those in cute people's drinks.**

B: **Right //**

C: **// How nice!**

Y: // **Lucky!**
 A: **Yah ok.** // But, I took it out.
 D: // Lucky
 E: // Lucky
 Y: **Shall we** // **put it back?**
 D: This is right here.

In (19), mocking or teasing an absent third party is one possible interpretation of the irony here. The discovery of some black object in A's drink leads the other members of the dinner party to comment on its provenance. In suggesting that "they" (being the restaurant) only put black dots of unknown origin in cute girl's glasses, C is proposing something that is ludicrous, and thus pragmatically insincere, yet B and Y quickly join in to agree with the proposition. Insofar as irony requires a victim to be ironic, the irony being used here appears to be directed not at C and her unexpected drink, but at the restaurant. In setting up a proposition wherein the restaurant is awarding favor to customers by putting mystery dots in their drinks, the members of this dinner conversation set up a contrast between the ludicrous proposition – that this was intentional and positive, against the reality – that the restaurant possibly served a dirty glass, thus directing any negative evaluation toward the restaurant.

In the televised interviews, on the other hand, less was seen of joking in the form of mocking absent parties. While this form of joking is safest in that it bonds speaker and listener against a common target, the televised data showed no instances of irony as a means of bonding through mocking absent parties. On the other hand, if on the surface conversations in interviews appear to be contained to the people present, the existence of an audience presents a second listener to the dynamic. In this sense, while targets of irony are not absent, and thus instances of mocking are all forms of teasing rather than bonding, it is possible that some jokes are created for the purposes of inviting the audience to laugh at the guest, rather than for the interviewer to tease the guest directly. This might be possible in (20), where at first glance either the young daughter who drew a poor picture of her mother, or the mother herself, is being teased.

(20)

N: *Tsuzukimashite, Himari-chan ga kaite kureta mama no e desu.*

A: *Yada! Nani, kore?*

[Laughter]

A: *Nani, kore? Chotto, anta!*

U: ***Himari-chan, sokkuri ja nai no!***

[Laughter]

A: *Me ga ookiku chanto kaite aru yo!*

U: ***E jouzu da ne!***

[Laughter]

A: Chotto, obake mitai ja nai?

U: ***Sonna koto nai yo ne, mama sokkuri da ne! Un. A, demo, sugoi ja nai desu ka? Mama daisuki tte kaite aru ne!***

A: *Un, nanka ne, watashi no tanjoubi no toki ni, (un) mo, “Mama otanjoubi omedetou” tte iu no wo (un) issokenmei zutto renshuu shite (aa) sore dake wo kaite kureta mitai n d--*

[Laughter]

N: Next, the picture that Himari-chan drew of her mother.

A: No, what is this?

[Laughter]

A: What is that! You...

U: **Himari-chan, it's the spitting image!**

[Laughter]

A: You drew the eyes nice and large.

U: **You're very good at drawing, huh?**

[Laughter]

A: Wait a minute, doesn't it look like a monster?

U: **Not at all, mama, it looks just like you, doesn't it?** Yes. Ah, but isn't that amazing! You've written "I love you mama" on here!

A: Ah, yah, on my birthday (yes) too, it seems she practiced really hard to be able to write "Happy Birthday Mommy" for me.

(“Oshareism,” Families)

If irony is thought to be inherently critical in Japanese, then this example could have one of three interpretations: the first is that the host is not afraid to mock a small girl's drawing talents, the second is that the host is gently mocking the girl's drawing talents (particularly as these comments echo earlier ones of a slightly older girl who had drawn a more impressive picture). Initially, this research intended to treat this data as the second, but on considering the role of the audience in the conversation, it is likelier that the third option is most fitting: the host is being ironic, but in doing so is setting up the mother for teasing, rather than the daughter. He juxtaposes the image drawn to the face of the mother and exploits the humorous potential by exclaiming it is a spitting image of her, thus inviting the audience to laugh, more so them than the potentially injured young daughter or the mother who likely wouldn't join in in mocking her own daughter's talent.

The remainder of the data from the televised interviews displayed forms of either teasing or gentle mocking, or participatory self-deprecation on the part of the guest. Example (21) is an example of the mocking teasing, the one example of sarcasm found that seemed to tend more clearly toward teasing than mockery or criticism.

(21)

Director: *Nagatomo senshu no inshouteki na episoodo ha gozaimasuka?*

Nakamura: *Docchi ka to iu to, saisho ha ore ga kare ni kyoumi ga atte,*

Director: *A, un.*

Nakamur: *Futsuu ni shaberi tsutsu, un, iron na koto kiitan desu kedo, sono bai ijou aitsu ga sugoi shitsumon shite kuru n de.*

[Laughter]

Uttoshikatta n desu kedo.

[Laughter]

Nakamura: *Un. Ma, koujou iyoku ga hanpa nai ssu ne. Un.*

Director: *Nagatomo senshu no, kou, naoshita hou ga ii na...*

Nakamura: *E, kare ni au tabi ni maikai ittemasu kedomo, agaru taimingu ga hidoi (.) FW ga motta toki ni, mada kao mo agete zettai nai ko, kocchi muiteiru taimingu nano ni (.) hitori de kankei nai hou ni kake agachatteru (.) De, kocchi muita toki ni Nagatomo no hou wo muita toki ni modotte kiteru [laughter] jibun no jinchi, jibun no ichi ga chigau. [laughter]*

Sokora hen ga subarashii sensu dana tte omotte.

Director: Can you remember a particularly impressionable memory of Nagatomo?

Nakamura: Well I think more than anything, at first I was the one interested in him.

Director: Ah, yes.

Nakamura: After talking pretty normally, yah, I did ask a bunch of things, but that guy asked more than twice that much.

[Laughter]

It was actually pretty annoying.

Yah, but, yah, I mean his motivation to improve is impressive.

Director: Is there any sort of, areas of improvement in Nagatomo?

Nakamura: Well, I tell him this every time I meet him, but his timing (on plays) is pretty terrible. When we held the World Cup, he was just totally not looking up at all, and when we should have been running this way, he's headed off somewhere else on his own. And then, when I was headed toward here, toward him, he was running back the wrong way [laughter]. His place, where he was was all wrong.

I thought that was some pretty amazing common sense.

[Laughter]

(“Oshareism,” Nagatomo)

As former teammates, it is likely that Nagatomo and Nakamura have a comfortable relationship, where teasing on this level does not offend. Furthermore, the neat contrast created between the set-up of Nagatomo’s poor directional sense against the final, brief summary of his skills has comfortable enough overlap with the signals for humor: brief, unexpected punch-line that somehow contrasts with the set-up, that this otherwise typical case of a reversal, or insincere praise, is still more humorous than mean. Finally, (22) is an example of the type of teasing and self-deprecation that can take place together in a conversation.

(22)

S: *Kore ha, ano, Oono ga hatachi no toki ni kureta e nan desu kedo.*

N: *Oono-san ga kakareta e?*

S: *Hai.*

U: *Oono-kun umai yo nee!*

S: ***Iya, ore no Totoro no hou ga umai desho!***

U: ***Eto, sumimasen, Totoro tte nan desu ka?***

S: ***Henshuu saseteru kara.***

[Laughter]

S: *Aa, sou ka, sou ka, umai desu, Oono-kun ga.*

S: So this is when, um, I turned 20 and Oono gave it to me.

N: A picture that Oono-san drew?

S: Right.

U: Oono-kun’s got talent!

S: **No, my Totoro is better, right?**

U: **Um, excuse me. What is this Totoro?**

S: **I’ll let you keep it in a book.**

Ah, I see, I see. He’s very good, Oono-kun.

[Laughter]

(“Oshareism,” Sakurai)

This particular guest had a habit of self-deprecating humor, especially in discussing his dubious artistic skills. Earlier in the interview, Sakurai had drawn a simple stick-figure image of Totoro, for which he was mocked by the host. In (22), Sakurai is showing a picture that is very talented friend has drawn, and through echoing his earlier-shown lack of skills, brings criticism on himself in a humorous way. In setting up the notion that his image would in any world be considered superior to his friend’s drawing, Sakurai invokes the contrast between their skills and highlights his own poor talent. The host then joins into this ironic discourse by pretending to have no idea who Totoro is, based on the horrible image. Finally, the ironic conversation is completed with Sakurai generously offering to have his own image framed and given to the show. In this way, irony can be seen to accomplish both teasing and self-deprecation as conversational participants construct the humorous dialogue together.

Finally, in the field notes, no overt forms of sarcasm were seen that contained any criticism or harsh judgment, but sarcasm used to mock and absent party was observed on two occasions, (23) and (24), and possibly in the comments of Ishikawa Ryo in (25). In the case of (23) and (24), the speaker was addressing the researcher while watching TV commercials.

(23)

Akira: *A, sore minai to, ore.*

Akira: Ah, I’ve gotta watch that.

(24)

Akira: *A. kono shiidian wo kawanaito, ore.*

Akira: Ah. I’ve gotta buy this CD.

(TV-watching, 10/14, 10/21)

In both instances, the only cue that the statements are insincere can be found in the background knowledge between the speaker and myself. The speaker, a lifelong fan of hardcore metal music and a harsh critic of mainstream pop, said both comments in reference to pop groups he did not like. In (23), the statement came after a commercial advertising a televised mini-concert for the Korean idol group Shoujou Jidai, while in (24) an advertisement for a new album by the artist, Daigo, was running. In both instances, the statements were rendered humorous through their contrast with the speaker's true feelings, information which I possess.

Two other instances of self-deprecating humor through irony were recorded in the field data. Example (25) was recorded at the beginning of a graduate-level course that the professor routinely began by asking how everyone's week had been. As all of the students are current Masters or Doctoral students, the schedules are predictably busy.

(25)

Prof: *Minna happyou no ato, tsukaremashita ka?*

Prof: ***Watshi mo saikin isogashikute, anta tachi [laughs] anta tachi no mendou de.***

Prof: Is everyone pretty tired out after finishing their presentations?

I've also been pretty busy, with all of the [laughs] all of the stuff I have to take care of for you.

(Professor and student, 10/24)

In position his own busy schedule as the fault of the students it is his job to mentor, as well as in subtly shifting register to a slightly antagonistic tone. The effect, with laughter, is that in positioning himself as annoyed by the task of doing the work of an advisor, with his own advisees present in the class, the professor instead appears to be retracting the statement that he is busy with anything more important than what the students themselves are working on.

Example (26) is one final example of possibly self-deprecating, possibly sarcastic humor comes in the form of a news clip featuring pro-golfer Ishikawa Ryo.

(26) Ishikawa Ryo won his first major tournament in two years .

Interviewer: *kono ninen dou deshitaka?*

Ryo: *kikanaide kudasai! [laughs]*

[crying]

Ryo: *zenzen tsurakunakatta desune.*

[laughs]

Interviewer: How have the past two years been for you?

Ryo: Please don't ask that! [laughs]

It was not at all difficult for me!

[Ryo and the crowd laugh.]

The statement is ironic in that the intended meaning is clearly the opposite of the spoken meaning, and humorous in that the immediate effect of both speaker and audience was to laugh. In juxtaposing his own clear relief at a victory for the first time in two years with the pretense of having not suffered at all, Ishikawa appears more humble, and capable of recognizing his difficult journey. Alternatively, when asked this question in the first place, Ishikawa starts by saying, “don't ask me that question,” in which case following with the comment “it wasn't difficult at all” would be an implicit criticism toward the interviewer for asking an obvious question. Likewise, it could simultaneously be accomplishing both functions, with Ishikawa presenting himself as humble and relieved while also letting the interviewer know his opinion of the question.

4.4 Discussion

4.4.1 Question 1: What types of pragmatic cues were present?

The types of pragmatic cues found to signal irony were divided into 8 categories: insincere or mock praise, insincere gratitude, greetings, advice, or apology, rhetorical questions, unrealistic interpretations, rhetorical techniques, ironically literal

interpretations, inappropriate style or register, and echoing. While the two major categories of irony could be said to roughly divide into two major groups (pretense or echo), the data was similar to the findings of Okamoto (2007) and Tsutsui (1989) that pretense itself could take on a number of different forms. In effect, any of the seven categories other than echoing could be considered forms of pretense. Okamoto (2007), using data largely culled from written works and thus often signaling irony very clearly with terms such as “ironically,” or “with irony,” (*hinikuni itta, hiniku wo komottei*), chose to divide the categories of cues not between echoing and pretense, but between simple reversals and non-reversals. This division is simple and neat, though this researcher if asked to analyze the data and create two groups, would ultimately find the division between pretense and echo more useful.

The cues found within the data clearly mirror cues found in English – most markedly the use of hyperbole and understatement, and the use of rhetorical questions. The latter category seemed a common and useful device for clearly marking the irony of a statement, perhaps moreso than it would be in English, because rhetorical questions, or as Okamoto (2007) categorizes it, infelicitous questions, are easily-interpreted signals of a non-literal statement.

The cues found were fewer in number of categories than Okamoto (2007), but this is attributed to the highly stratified nature of his list of pragmatic cues. For Okamoto (2007), whose data was informed by a corpus utilizing phrases that introduce ironic comments, as noted above, the nature of whether a comment is intended ironically or not is settled before the data is analyzed, allowing more room for a detailed stratification of types of cues. In spoken data, on the other hand, no failsafe cues of irony exist outside those outlined in Chapter 3, which assumes a list of prerequisites for how to identify irony, but does not provide any infallible litmus test that distinguishes a comment that is humorous or false from one that is ironic.

4.4.2 Question 2: What forms of teasing, jocular, and self-deprecating humor can occur with irony?

Interestingly, there appeared to be a pattern across the types of data of what types of ironic humor were common in conversation. In televised dramas, ironic humor was

less common than sarcasm, which was used first and foremost to enhance criticism. While humor can be found to exist in sarcasm in English (Jorgenson, 1996), and is more likely to occur between intimates (Clift, 1999; Gibbs, 2001), this was not seen in the data. Interestingly, however, sarcasm was also not seen in the natural conversation data, implying it as a relatively rare tactic for criticism or humor. Irony is a form of teasing, however, was present across all forms of data, and seemed particularly prevalent (rather than the other two forms of humor) in conversations between friends and in classroom situations between the professor and his students. Likewise, teasing an absent other was also seen in the natural conversation data, which was not surprising, as it was the least threatening form of irony as humor.

Self-deprecating humor, as well as co-constructed ironic banter between speaker and listener, was most common on the televised interviews, where the speaker and listener were perhaps more motivated and invested in creating a playful atmosphere that would entertain the audience. As Boxer (2002) notes that self-deprecating humor is commonly deployed to present the speaker positively, in that he or she is capable of not taking him or herself too seriously, this helps to explain its prevalence in televised interviews. The guest, in an effort to appear unpretentious and approachable, would be more likely than the average conversation participant to use self-deprecating humor. And in terms of co-constructed irony, both host and guest are aware of the role of the interview as being entertainment, and so both host and guest exploit the opportunity to simultaneously poke fun at and be made fun of (as was most amply seen with the guest Sakurai on the show *Oshareism*).

4.4.3 Question 3: Does sarcasm exist on a continuum of hurtful to humorous?

Analysis of the data required some mechanism or justification for creating a boundary between ironic statements that could be considered sarcastic versus those that could be considered simply ironic. The ultimate deciding factor in assigning data to either of these two categories came down to a consideration of the primary impact of the statement: if a statement was first meant to elicit laughter, then considered for its judgemental implications, it could be considered ironic. However, if a statement could

first be considered meant to highlight a negative attitude toward a target, and might secondarily be amusing, it would be considered sarcastic. This rendered the data easy to classify, with the added effect of highlighting the strictly negative application of sarcastic comments. Within the data, comments designed to cause hurt were limited to fiction – they only occurred in scripted television, and were clearly more hurtful than playful. The data indicates that sarcastic irony (*hiniku*) is overwhelmingly used to criticize, with little indication that it is favored as a way to both criticize and poke fun, as has been found in English. Though there is a strong case to be made for the cultural background that informs interaction in Japanese society, namely the desire to maintain pleasant relations over expressing honest opinions, the data makes clear that joking even in a manner that implies criticism is not uncommon in Japanese conversation. However, sarcastic irony appears to be too dangerous a conversational tool for conventional use.

Summary

In total, 47 instances of irony were found across all types of data collected. This number is not representative of any kind of indication of frequency of irony use. While the sum total of ironic utterances used in television dramas implies an either comparable or slightly higher use of irony than in televised interviews, this is based on an extremely small data set, and thus, discussion of frequency is set aside for the purposes of this study. The pragmatic cues found in the data separated into a summarized, truncated version of the cues offered in Okamoto (2007) and included insincere praise, greetings, advice, or apology (known as Reversals in Assertives and Reversals in Non-Assertives in Okamoto (2007)), rhetorical questions, unrealistic interpretations of situations, understatement and hyperbole, ironically literal interpretations, and inappropriate style of speech or register, as well as echoing. There were, however, more cases of pretense as a pragmatic cue than echo found in the data, which bears out Okamoto (2007)'s findings. In some cases, there was also overlap of cues. Additionally, borderline examples found in the data which displayed both indirect speech and an element of teasing or conversational joking were removed from the data because of a lack of identifiable implied attitude, positive or negative, that is key to identifying such language as ironic.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter will discuss the findings based on the three major research questions asked at the beginning of the paper. Next, it will consider the limitations of this research and finally, it will discuss questions for further study.

Discussion

This study was motivated by an interest in understanding how irony, a form of humor so ubiquitous in English conversation that it is considered “the master trope” (Gibbs, 2001), could be a form of humor in Japanese conversation. It was already assumed at the outset based on personal experience that irony was, in fact, a form of humor in Japanese, but that the means through which it was produced and the types of humor it was used for would be different from those in English. In order to examine this more closely, a total of more than 15 hours of recorded spoken Japanese in scripted dramas, scripted narration, televised interviews, and private dinner conversations were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed based on three main research questions:

- Q1 What discernible types of pragmatic cues were present?
 - a. Do they bear any resemblance to the cues suggested by Okamoto (2007)?
- Q2 What forms of teasing, jocularity, and self-deprecating humor can occur using irony in Japanese across the data?
- Q3 Does sarcasm exist on a continuum between mocking and humorous, or is it entirely critical?

In recording and analyzing data, both Okamoto (2007) and Tsutsui (1989) were used as guides in determining where pragmatic cues differed, and where they overlapped.

Ultimately, 8 major categories were found: insincere praise, greetings, advice, or apology, rhetorical questions, unrealistic interpretations of situations, understatement and hyperbole, ironically literal interpretations, inappropriate style of speech or register, and echoing. These were all cues consistent with Okamoto (2007). The presence of an echo was strong enough to warrant its own pragmatic cue, but as to the pretense that Kumon-

Nakamura, et al. (1995), this research ultimately considered the rough breakdown of categories to be either echoic in nature, or pretense, thus making 7 of the 8 designated categories various forms of pretense.

The second question concerned the types of teasing irony could accomplish as a form of conversational joking. Many researchers have found that irony, and to an extent sarcasm, can bring humor to a situation, lessening criticism, or even heightening it at the same time that it strengthens the sense of humor (Jorgenson, 1996; Clift, 1999; Gibbs, 2000; Hirsh, 2011). Within the data, the patterns of use of irony to tease, mock, or be self-deprecating were different across different genres – dinner conversation participants were more likely overall to use other strategies of teasing than irony, but in those instances that irony occurred, it was used for all three forms of conversational joking, with perhaps slight bias toward being self-deprecating or mocking an absent party than in teasing or mocking someone present. While there were instances of mocking conversational participants, the means through this was achieved was often not irony. The televised interviews, on the other hand, showed far more instances of teasing, as well as co-constructed teasing and self-deprecation. The scripted data showed more of a tendency to use irony sarcastically, to mock or criticize and with little indication of humor.

A larger amount of echoic irony was expected, based on Takekuro (2006)'s assessment of conversational joking in Japanese to be based off of conversational context and past comments. However, a review of the data found that the humorous use of irony was often manifested not through echoing, but through different forms of pretense – for example in a change of register or use of politeness, or in the use of rhetorical questions and insincere praise or advice. This suggests that irony in Japanese is largely based on pretense rather than echo: ironic acts are carried out through contrasting the way of saying something with the event being described. The research was also expected to yield a larger number of irony with a specific target – irony with some degree of implied attitude toward a specific person or event, rather than a general state of affairs such as the weather. Indeed this proved true: irony that poked fun at absent others while simultaneously exploiting shared beliefs and opinions between speaker and listener

contained no target within the conversation, but clearly contained a target in the form of an absent third party.

The final question of this study concerned the role of sarcasm and humor. As was briefly touched on above, sarcasm in English has been found to be capable both of enhancing criticism and negative evaluation and reducing it and creating a humorous atmosphere (Boxer, 2002; Jorgenson, 1996). As sarcasm is generally identified as *hiniku* in Japanese, and as this term is rarely associated with positive emotions, I did not anticipate a large number of positive examples of sarcasm. This was also supported in the data. Self-deprecating could be said to be self-directed criticism, but it could also be argued according to the definition of sarcasm versus irony that the goal of self-deprecating humor is to be funny first, then self-critical, and in this way more ironic than sarcastic. Similarly, forms of joking that utilized irony were largely instances of light criticism or, between close friends, instances of shared opinions, and not exactly instances where the goal was to highlight a negative attitude (humorously or otherwise). On the other hand, in scripted conversations on TV shows, the traditional concept of sarcasm seemed to have been preserved, and had far greater use as a tool for criticism than was found in any of the natural conversations or interviews.

Issues for further research

This research was focused primarily on establishing patterns of pragmatic cues in irony in natural conversation and how they compared to those cues put forth in Okamoto (2007). A key difference between the data used in Okamoto (2007) and this data was that this research focused on spoken Japanese only, while Okamoto (2007) reviewed the use of irony in text, which comes with cues that more explicitly signal irony than are usually found in conversation. Thus, it proved difficult to fully explore the range of pragmatic cues suggested without other written or explicit signals that irony was being used.

This data also was focused on observing how irony could be used to be humorous in Japanese. It had less concern with how the humorous use of irony related to patterns such as gender or hierarchical situations, even while knowing that these considerations are often discussed in other empirical studies. This data also offers no quantitative

analysis on how often different types of irony are used to what effect in Japanese conversation. The data set was kept small in order to assure that everything could be transcribed and analyzed in a timely manner.

Further study that could be carried out with this research includes two different approaches: it would be valuable to collect elicited data in the form of interviews with study participants who could share their experience of using irony as a tool for conversation, as a means of better establishing native-speaker perception of irony and how it is used. Additionally, a closer examination of why irony is used certain ways by certain people, and not used in other ways, especially as a contrastive study with the use of irony in English, would be even more revealing on how irony functions in Japanese conversation.

Ultimately, I believe this research could be valuable in assessing how people do and do not use irony for humor in Japanese as a means of comparing strategies for teaching and learning second languages. Communicatively, it is valuable to be able to assess what forms of speech will alienate, and what will build affiliation between speakers, as well as which of those strategies is most commonly used in a target language.

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Dictionaries

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URL ... <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/irony>

Oxford English Dictionary Online

URL ... <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/irony>

Appendix: Examples of Irony, pragmatic cues, type of conversational joking

You Are My Pet (2003)

(1) Episode 1 unrealistic interpretation /pretense, sarcasm/mocking

- S: *Onegai shiteta shorui doko?*
K: *A! gomen nasai! Ima youi shimasu!*
S: *Ima kara youishite donogurai kakaruno?*
K: *E, a +ichijikan han gurai...*
S: *Nijimade ni kanarazu tteiwanakatta?*
Iiwa, kocchi de junbi suru kara
K: *A, doumo sumimasen*
S: ***Ii no yo. Anata ni tanonda watashi ga warui no.***
T: *Aikawarazu kowee na, Iwaya-san.*

- S: Where are the papers I asked for?
K: Ah! I'm sorry! I'll prepare them now!
S: How long will it take you to prepare them?
K: Eh, ah + about an hour and a half...
S: Didn't I tell you I absolutely needed them by 2?
Never mind, I'll do it.
K: Ah (.) thanks (.) sorry.
S: **It's fine! It's my fault for asking you in the first place.**
T: **Terrifying, as usual, Ms. Iwaya.**

(2) Episode 1 rhetorical question, sarcasm/mocking

- Y: *Un (.) Iwaya -san ha dou?*
I: *Dou tte?*
Y: *E (.) a (.) sono, choushi to ka.*
I: ***Betsu ni kawaranai wa. Naite kurashiteru you ni mieru?***

Y: Yes...And how about Iwaya-san?

I: What do you mean, “how about?”
 Y: Eh, um, well, your health and stuff.
 I: **Nothing’s really changed. Do I look like I’m living in tears?**

(3) Episode 1 – inappropriate register, sarcasm

M: *Gochisousama deshita! Kore sugoi oishikatta.*
 S: ***Sou? Genki ni natta mitai de yokatta.***
 M: *Un! Okagesamade chou genki!*
 S: ***Dattara detette.***
 Soretmomo keisatsu ni renraku shita hou ga ii no kashira?

 M: Thanks for the food. It was amazing!
 S: **Oh? How good to see you’ve recovered.**
 M: Yep, thanks to you I’m all better!
 S: **Then get out.**
 Or, would you rather I call the police?

(4) Episode 2 – Insincere apology/pretense, sarcasm

S: *Hanashitakatta no yo. Demo, hora, watashi tte furiitooku nigate da shi.*
 Kyuu dattara meiku amai no mo ki ni natte
 Sorene, hisashiburi ni aeta no ni, kakko warui koto ga miraretakunai shi.
 Y: *Hora, mata kakko tsuke.*
 Honto kawaikunai yo, sou iu koto.
 S: ***Warukatta wa ne.***
 Y: *Sore ni ittoku kedo, otoko tte nowa,*
 Kakkoyokute yuushuu na onna nanka yori tashoo azatokutemo chotto
 obaka de suki ga atte hera hera waratte ruyou na onna ga sukinano.
 S: *Ima no serifu mukatsuku.*
 Y: *Jijitsu dakara desho?*

S: I wanted to talk to him. But, see, I've always been bad at free talk.
And if it's sudden I worry about how my make-up looks, and I don't want to look stupid.

Y: Ah, see, worrying about your image again.
That kind of thing is really unattractive.

S: **I'm so sorry.**

Y: And I'll tell you, boys,
Rather than wanting girls who are cool and smart prefer women who are kind of dumb and airheaded, the kind that giggle at everything.

S: That talk pisses me off.

Y: Probably because it's true.

(5) Episode 2 – inappropriate style, sarcasm

S: *Urusaiyo. Shaberenaide detette (.) Detette. Okane ageru kara.*
Detetteyo. Watashi wa hitori ga suki nano.

M: *A, sou?*
Jaa, gokatte ni.

S: Shut up, stop talking and get out (.) Leave. I'll give you money.
Get out. I prefer being alone.

M: **Oh, really?**
Fine, go crazy.

(6) Episode 3 – echoic/insincere thanks, sarcasm

S: *Moshimoshi, Yurichan, ima ii?*

Y: *Yokunai. Temijika ni.*

S: *Wakatta. Honjitsu gogo nijuuichiji goro, hatsu deeto Hasumisenpai ga ie made okutte kurete, tsukiatte kure to kokuhaku sarete.*

Y: *Ano sa, noroke dattara mata ashita yukkuri kiku kara.*

S: *Chigauno, sore Momo ni miraretano! Momo ttara nanka sugoi sunechatte.*

Y: *Sutenasai yo, kareshi ga dekitan dattara.*

S: *Eh? Datte, kareshi to petto ha betsumon dashi.*

Y: *Anta ie no petto ha hitoka no osu deshouga!*
[hangs up]

S: ***Temijikana kaitou arigatou.***

S: Hello, Yuri-chan, is now a good time?

Y: It is not. Keep it short.

S: Got it. Today at about 9 pm Hasumi and I went on our first date and he walked me home and asked if we could go steady.

Y: Um, if this is a relationship forum, I will listen very carefully tomorrow.

S: No no, Momo saw it happen! And now Momo is all jealous.

Y: Get rid of him, you've got a boyfriend now.

S: Eh? But boyfriends and pets are separate things.

Y: The pet in your house is a human male!
(hangs up)

S: **Thanks for keeping it short.**

Moody Gene (2005)

(7) Episode 1 – unrealistic interpretation/insincere praise, teasing/mockery

U: *Dou ka na, kyou no kono ishou? Ima kara joshidai de kaiyougaku no rekushaa nan da. Munamoto, hirakisugi ka na? Ganbatte wakabutte shippai shiteiru dasai otona ni dake ha miraretakunai.*

Y: ***Ii to omoimasu yo, tekido ni ojisan ppokute.***

U: ***Kimi no sono ishou koso, tomu sooya ka nani ka na no ka na?***

Y: *Sagyougi desu! kore kara fiirudo de konchuusaishu –*

U: *Moushikashite yaiteru?*

Y: *Hai?*

U: *Kanojo ha daigaku jidai kara no yuujin da yo! Uzura no mesu ha uzura no osu ni hoka no uzura no mesu ga kuru to kyuu ni sono uzura no osu ni shuuchaku shihajimeru*

(8) Continued – echo, sarcasm

Y: *Shittemasu yo, suugaku no Jinguuji sensei desho? Te iu ka, yaku wake nai ja nai desuka? Hayaku sono munamoto de joshidaisei ni sekkusu apiiru shitekite kudasai*

U: *Hai Kiite kureteta no ka?*

U: How do I look today? I'm giving an oceanography lecture at a women's college. Too many buttons undone at the neck? I'm trying to look young and hip, but I just don't want to look like some old fogey.

Y: I think it looks good, **just right for a moderately old man.**

U: **And how about you with your clothes, what are you, Tom Sawyer?**

Y: These are work clothes! I'm about to do field collection of insects.

U: Could it be that you are jealous?

Y: What?

U: She's just a friend from college! When the female partridge sees any other female approach her mate she starts to attack.

Y: I know, she's Professor Jinguuji, the math professor, right? More importantly, there is no way I am jealous. **Hurry up and take that chest over to the female undergrads and show them your sex appeal.**

U: Fine. You listened??

(9) Episode 3 –insincere praise, sarcasm

W: *Uso yo! Anna ni onna no ie tomatetari aruitetari kuse ni!*

U: *Sonna koto ichido mo shitenai.*

W: *Shiteta janai!*

U: *Ichido mo shitenai to wa iwanai. Demo honto ni isogashikatan da! Sore ni ano koro no kurou wo kakete ima no ore ga aru no*

W: ***Sore ha sore ha gorippa desu koto.***

U: *Kimi wo omotteta*

W: *Watashi ha kirai datta. Tabekata mo ofuro ni hairukoto mo kagu no okikata mo, myouji datte don don kirai ni natta.*

W: Liar! After all the women you ran around with!

U: I never did that!

W: You did!

U: I won't say that I NEVER did. But I really was busy!
And anyway it was all that hard work and suffering that made me who I am today!

W: **Oh well how wonderful for you.**

U: I cared for you!

W: I hated it. The way you ate, the way you took a bath, the way you arranged the furniture, even your last name, I hated all of it.

Love Shuffle (2009)

(10) Episode 1 – unrealistic interpretation of a situation, teasing/mocking

O: *Reiko-san, kocchi.*

K: *Chou serebu.*

O: *Ma, sonna kanji. No sa, ore mo yoku wakaranain dakedo ne.*

A: ***hanaji deteru yo (.) Hanaji.***

Ke: *uso!*

A: *uso--*

M: ***iyada, ecchi //nee!***

A: //nee!

Ke: *fu fu, ne!*

O: Reiko, over here.

K: Quite the celebrity.

O: Well, pretty much. Not that I really get it, either.

A: **You're nose is bleeding. Nosebleed.**

Ke: Really?!

A: No

M: **My, how dirty-minded.**

A: Indeed!

Ke: **heh heh, Indeed!**

(11) Episode 1 – pretense/unrealistic interpretation, teasing

A: *Nanka, watashi zuibun yasuku agerarechatteru mitai ne.*

K: *A, kimi ha ki toranai mise no hou ga suki ka to omotte. Iya nara deyou ka.*

A: *U::n, joudan, joudan.*

A: **I'm getting a pretty cheap reception, it seems.**

K: Ah, I thought maybe you'd prefer something in-austentacious. We can leave if you don't like it.

A: No, I'm just joking,

(12) Episode 3 – inappropriate register/insincere greeting, sarcasm

A: *Oojiro, anta saitei da yo. Watashi ga deatta jinsei saitei otoko ranku, nanbaa wan da!*

O: (clapping) **Omedetou! Ah, sou kai. Anta ha futari socchi no mikata kai. Jaa, nakayoku paatii wo suzukete cho. Jaa na.**

A: Oojiro, you are the worst. Of all the terrible men I have met in my life, you rank number 1!

O: [clapping] **Congratulations! Ah, I see! You two are on his side, huh. Ok, by all means enjoy the rest of your party. Tah tah.**

(14) Episode 3 – echoic/ sarcastic, self-deprecating

A: *A--! Watashi, hayatochiri onnna jinsei nanbaawandaa! **Omedetouu!***

M: *ehe!*

A: *nani anta warattenno? Motomoto anta no sei desho?*

M: *Gomen nasai.*

A: Ah! I am the fastest woman I know who jumps to conclusions!

Congratulations!

M: heehee!

A: What are you laughing at? This is all you're fault, isn't it?

M: Sorry.

(15) Episode 3 – rhetorical question/ echoic, sarcasm/teasing

A & K: *O-chan, gomen!*

O: ***Nande ayamaru no? Jinsei saitei ranku nanbaa wan no otoko ni?***

A: *A, sore wa!*

K: ***Hidoi. Sonna koto iu ka, futsuu?***

A: *Anta okottan desho?*

O: *Itetete! Itai!*

K: *Mada itai no? Daijoubu? Itai no itai no, tondeke!*

A: *Daijoubu? Kokoro no itai no mo tondeke!*

A & K: O-chan, sorry!

O: **Why apologize? To the world's number one terrible man?**

A: Ah, about that!

K: **Horrible! Would you say that, normally?**
 A: YOU were angry!
 O: Owowowowow! That hurts!
 K: Does it still hurt? Are you ok? Pain, pain, go away!
 A: Are you OK? Pain of your heart, fly away!

(16) Episode 3 – unrealistic interpretation of situations, teasing

K: *Moushiwake nain dakedo, chotto youji ga atte.*
 A: *Yasumi no hi nanoni?*
 K: *Shiyounan dakedo.*
 A: ***Wakatta! Honmei no kanojou to aunda!***
 K: *Ee?*
 A: *Yada! Zuhoo?*
 K: *Kimi ha hontou ni kan ga ii.*

K: I'm sorry but, I have a previous engagement.
 A: Even though it's the weekend?
 K: It's a private matter.
 A: **I get it! You're going to meet your real girlfriend!**
 K: Eh?
 A: Oh no. I got it right?
 K: You really have amazing intuition.

Shirushiru Mishiru Sunday

(17) 9/24 -- Rhetorical strategy, teasing

Kyou ha jizen no sangurasu wo kakete toujou shitai to itte kita Taitou hissho.
Kami makutte iketenai no de, sassoku koukyuu na hakutou wo tsukutteiru to iu
hatake he.

Today, wishing to wear the sunglasses from his last trip, is reporter Taitou.
As he is uncool to the point of ridicule, let's make haste to the farm said to be growing white peaches.

- (18) 9/24 – ironically literal interpretation, teasing

Jiinzū no shuzai nanoni, suutsu de bacchiri kimetekita Yamashita hissho.

Despite the fact that he is covering a story about jeans, here is reporter Yamashita in a well-tailored suit.

- (19) 9/24 -- understatement, teasing

Gangan tataite iku.

Atsuku natta tama hagane wo tataku koto de, naka ni aru iou nado no fujunbutsu ga uki detekuru.

Suru to koko de, ikinari mizu wo kakehajimeta.

Betsu ni kore, omoshirogatte Ayaman wo kyaa kyaa ni iwaseteiru wake de ha nai.

He continues pounding away.

Through pounding on the heated ball of steel, the sulfur and other impure elements are removed.

And once this is done, suddenly he begins tossing water onto it.

This was not especially to make Ayaman scream.

- (20) 9/24 – ironically literal/ pretense, teasing

Kyuugekina ondo henka de kinzoku ga henka shi, katana no sori ga umarerun da.

Soshite, oyoso hantsuki wo toritsudukeru koto de, utsukushii Nippontou ga dekiagaru.

Maru no bubun ni () wo imeeji shita, () to iu moyou ga tsuiteiuru no ga, izentou mo tokuchou.

Sono kiremi ha:

“Bacchiri icchatte kudasai!”

Shikashi, konna kamigire de ha sugosa ga tsutawaranai.

Through a drastic change in temperature the metal changes, and the edge of the blade is formed.

And, over the work of about half a month, the gorgeous Japanese sword is born.

Around the handle are images of (). The pattern of () is a feature of older katana as well.

And for the sharpness of the blade.

“Please go for it in one swipe!”

However, this type of cut fails to express the true wonder of the blade.

- (21) 5/20 – pretense, teasing

Cashio?! Nan to iu maniakku na mise. Donnani chiisana kaisha nanoka to omotte tazunetemiruto, Shibuya no (), chou kyoudai biru. Ichiryuukigyō janaika?

Casio?? **What a fanatic store.** To see just how tiny this little-known place would be we visited, only to find it was in a gigantic building right in () of Shibuya. This business is doing pretty well.

- (22) 5/20 hyperbole, self-deprecation

Mochiron, roke basho mo saikou no yuuenchi wo youi shita. Sorega, Yomuri Rando.

Iyaiya, motto saikou na hanayaka na yuuenchi ga aru desho nannte omou kamo shirenaiga, Yomiuri Rando san ga saikou na no ha, nandemo yarashite kureru

tokoro. Tatoeba, motto hanayaka ni shitaina, konna ongaku wo kakechattemo ookee na no da!

Of course, we have prepared the best amusement park for our shoot! Which would be, Yomiuri Land.

No no, you're probably thinking, there must be a better and more exciting place, but Yomiuri Land's main attraction is, they will let us play anything. For example, if we feel like play a little more exciting music, even this song is OK!

- (23) 10/7 -- ironically literal interpretation, commenting on ironic situation

*To, koko made Nippon hamu no iron na shouhin wo mite kita ga, wareware ha koko de juudai na koto ni kiduita: **Nippon Hamu no tokushu na no ni, hamu no koto wo mattaku chousa shiteinakatta.***

And here, after having observed several products from Nippon Ham, a matter of great importance occurs to us: **Despite the fact that this was a visit to Nippon Ham, we never looked at the ham.**

- (24) 10/7 – Inappropriately literal, teasing

*Toriaezu, **kono intaabyuu no tame ni megane wo atarashiku kata tantousha no kata ni doko ni ikeba ii ka kiite mita.***

For now we headed over to the guide, **who had bought a new pair of glasses just for this interview**, to ask directions.

Dinner Conversation

- (25) 4 people, 2 hours – pretense/ inappropriate style or register, self-deprecating

I: *Ii kara hayaku nome yo.*

[Laughter]

I: *Tsugi no sa, hayaku tanonde agetakute sa.*

YT: *Watashi, tsugi shiro wain dakara*

[Laughter]

I: *Shiro wain ka!*

YO: *Na::ni?* [laughs]

YT: *Iou to omotta kedo, zettai yametoko.*

Yo: *Na:nde?*

YT: *Sou iu fuu ni iu kedo, atashi no hou ga senpai dakara ne // YO: [laughs//
tte iou to omotta kedo, nanka boketsu horisou dakara yametoko [laughs]*

I: *Senpai!*

[Laughter]

YT: *De:sho::?*

[Laughter]

YT: *Are, hachi juu ichi nen?*

YO: *Hachi juu ichi.*

I: *Ore mada nijuu kuu nande::*

YO: *Watashi //mo mada nijuu kyuu sai nande:*

YT: *//Uso da::. Eh?*

YO: *Nijuu kuu --*

YT: *A, juu ni gatsu ni// juu yokka:*

YO: *// ni juu yokka. Sou.* [laughs]

YT: ***Omaera kuso gaki (kore ha)*** [laughs]

YO: [laughs]

I: ***A, Sumimasen, senpai! Kuso ga//ki de***

YT: *// chigau atashi datte mada sanjuu da mon!
juu ni gatsu da mon!*

YO: *De* [laughs]

I: *Sou ne::.*

YT: *Juu ni gatsu da mon!*

I: *Senpa::i.*

[laughter]

YT: *Demo mada sanjuu dai ja nai no wo bikkuri shita.*

I: Whatever, hurry up and drink.

[Laughter]

I: The next one, ye see, I want to hurry up and order your next drink for you.

[Laughter]

YT: Well I will be getting white wine next.

I: White wine?!

YT: (.) No.

YO: What? [laughs]

YT: I was going to say, but no I'm definitely not sharing.

YO: Why:?

YT: I'll say it this way, but I am older than you guys.

YO: [laughs]

YT: I was going to say, but, I felt like I was digging a deeper grave for myself
so I stopped.

[laughs]

I: My senior!

[laughs]

YT: Ri::ght?

[laughs]

YT: Wait, you are eighty-one?

YO: Eighty-one.

I: So I'm still 29.

YO: Me // too, I'm also still 29.

YT: // No::.. Eh?

YO: 29—

YT: Ah, December twenty-// fourth
 YO: // twenty-fourth. Right. [laughs]
 YT: **You little brats (here)** [laughs]
 YO: [laughs]
 I: **Ah, sorry, senior! For being little // brats!**
 YT: // No I mean even I am still 30!
 It's in December!
 YO: So [laughs]
 I: Ye::s.
 YT: It's in December!

(26) Dinner: 4 people – Insincere praise, self-deprecating/ teasing

YO: *Dou?*
 YT: *Nn, nanka (.) otoire.*
 I: *Dou iu imi?*
 YT: *Otoire no nioi ga suru yo [laugh] a, demo, suppai.*
 YO: *Nomiyasui?*
 C: *Kimochi wakaru kedo.*
 YO: *Kimochi ha wakaru kedo* [laughs]
 I: ***Yokatta ne (.) Ma iiya.***
 [Laughter]
 Y: ***hitokuchi kurai nomeba?***
 I: *ii, ii.*
 [Laughter]

YO: How is it?
 YT: M, Kind of. Like a toilet.
 I: What does that mean?
 YT: It smells like a toilet! [laughs] Ah, but it's sour.
 YO: Is it easy to drink?

C: I know what you mean though.
 YO: I know what you mean though [laughs]
 I: **Well good** (.) Oh well.
 [Laughter]
 Y: **Maybe if you took a sip?**
 I: No, thanks.
 [laughter]

(27) Dinner, 5 people – unrealistic interpretation / mocking an absent party

A: *Kore nani? Torenai.*
 B: *Nani?*
 C: *Nani nani?*
 A: *Kuroi, ten ga hitte iru kedo.*
 C: *Ten?*
 Y: *Mushi?*
 B: *Chotto yamete.*
 [Laughter]
 Y: *Nonjae, nonjae!*
 [Laughter]
 A: *Toreta yo!*
 B: *Toreta!*
 Y: *Shinanai shinanai. [laughs] Watashi nanka jitensha koideru toki yoku tabero yo, mushi.*
 B: *Heso no goma tte ireta n desho?*
 Y: *Kyahaha, kimochi warui!*
 A: *Goma haitte iru.*
 C: ***kawaii hito no ni haitteta kara***
 B: ***//Un//***
 C: ***// Yokatta ne.***
 Y: ***// Rakkii.***

A: *Un, sou. // Demo tocchatta.*

C: *// rakkii.*

B: *// rakkii.*

Y: ***mo//dosu?***

// rakkii //

D: *Kore, koko ni aru yo.*

B: *Ore ni, ore ni urami ga aru nara, sore de dou shita no?*

Nani?

Y: *So! no goma ja shinanai kara.*

[Laughter]

Daijoubu da yo

A: What is this? I can't get it off.

B: Wh//at?

C: *//What, what?*

A: There's a black (.) spot in here.

Y: An insect?

B: Please stop.

[Laughter]

Y: Drink it, drink it!

[Laughter]

A: I got it out!

B: You got it out!

Y: You won't die. (laughs) I've swallowed plenty before on my bike to work, bugs.

B: Didn't they just put in some belly button lint?

Y: Kihahaha, that's disgusting!

A: There's a sesame seed in there.

C: **They put those in cute people's drinks.**

B: **Right //**

C: // **How nice!**
 Y: // **Lucky!**
 A: **Yah ok.** // But, I took it out.
 D: // Lucky
 E: // Lucky
 Y: **Shall we** // **put it back?**
 D: This is right here.

(28) Dinner - - 5 people -- pretense, unrealistic interpretation of situation, teasing

B: *Zettei tonari konpa da.*
 Y: *Urayamashii?*
 D: *Urayamashii?//*
 Y: // *Urayamashii no?*
 C: *Itte oide yo.*
 A: *Urayamashii.*
 Y: *Urayamashii. **Te iu ka, kono haaremu joutai wo sashioite konpa wo urayamashigaru tte dou iu koto?***
 B: *Chigau.*
 D: *U, (utatteremo) iin da yo.*
 B: *Dakara, tonari konpa da tte itta dake yo.*
 [Laughter]
 A: *Minna, yakkami.*
 Y; *Minna nani sore. Uchira no tachiba yo.*
 [Laughter]
 B: *Bijin yon nin ni kakomaretara, ore, hontou ni Aoki-san ya Shimizu-san ni hontou ni, zettei, kuchi ga saketemo ienai kara ne.*
 Y: ***Hontou desu yo. Arigataku omotte goran.***
 [Laughter]
 B: *Gasshoo!*

A: *That's definitely a mixer at the table next to us.*

Y: *Are you jealous?*

D: *Are you jealous?//*

Y: *//Are you jealous?*

C: *Go ahead and tell us.*

A: *Jealous.*

Y: ***Jealous. And with this harem situation going on, what does it mean that you are envious of a mixer?***

B: *That's not it.*

D: *Go ahead and sing it.*

B: *I'm saying, I'm just saying that there is a mixer going on next to us!*

[Laughter]

A: *We are gossips.*

Y: ***I mean what is that for us. Our position!***

[Laughter]

B: *If I am surrounded by 4 lovely ladies, I, even to Aoki-san or Shimori-san I wouldn't say a word even if my mouth was split open.*

Y: ***That's right. Think of how grateful you are.***

[Laughter]

B: *Gassho!*

(29) Dinner, 2 people – rhetorical question, teasing/self-deprecating

A: *Suraido shitari nobashitari.*

Y: *A::*

Y: *Uhahaha, tanoshi::! [laughs]*

Y: *[laughs] demo, demo kou yatte nani mo konakattara chou hazukashii kara [laughs] Nani mo shinai! [laughs]*

A: *[laughs] shikamo sa, kore tte sa, kou dake janakute, osaete kou yattemo --*

Y: *Ikuhahahaha [laughs]*

Yondenai ne, zenzen.

A: ***Itsu no jidai no hito mitai na!***

Y: *U::!* [laughs]

A: *U::!* [laughs]

Y: ***Sumaho hajimete? Mitai na!*** [laughs]

A: You can slide and stretch.

Y: Ahh.

Uahaha! It's fun! [laughs]

[laughs] But, but, if I did this and nothing happened it would be so embarrassing! So [laughs] I won't try anything!

A: [laughs] And, right, this is, right, not just this, but also if you try pushing it like this...

Y: It goe-hahahaha! [laughs]

I'm not reading this at all!

A: **What time period are you from!**

Y: Oooo! [laughs]

A: Oooo! [laughs]

Y: **Is this your first time with a smart phone? Right?** [laughs]

(30) Dinner, 2 people – echo, mocking absent party

Y: *De, nan dakke, e, AB gata rashiku,*

A: *N?*

Y: *AB, ketsueki gata ga AB gata rashiku, sonna koto made kikoete kitan dakedo* [laughs], *kiiteru tsumori nai!* [laughs]

A: *Kyoumi nai!* [laughs]

Y: *“AB gata dakara,” nanka, “nijuu jinn kaku nan desu, watashi, ufu fu!” tte ittete. “Sou nan daa” tte.*

A: [laughs]

- Y: *Nanka, [laughs] De, nanka, chikaku no seki no hito, josei mo AB gata datta rashikute, “Ee? Daredare-san, AB gata nano? Yatta!” tte ittete mo, mattaku imi ga wakaranai! [laughs] Nani ga yatta nano? **Yuketsu?** Ttoka tte! [laughs]*
- A: *(Mijikani ita ne.)*
- Y: ***Soueba, hinketsu tte itteta kara na, doudemo ii koto** [laugh]*
- A: *Sugoi tsukkomitai!*
- Y: *Un! Sugoi tsu, te, chikaku no seki janakute yokatta*
- Y: And, what was it, um, apparently she is AB type.
- A: Huh?
- Y: AB, her bloodtype is SB, I mean that’s how much I can hear [laughs], I don’t intend to hear it! [laughs]
- A: Un-interested! [laughs]
- Y: “Because I’m AB type,” um, “Me, I’m a split personality! He he!” She said. “Ohh, really,” I said.
- A: [laughs]
- Y: And, [laughs] The, um, the person who sits nearby, this woman is apparently also AB type, so she says, “Huh? So-and-so, you are AB? Yes!” I have no idea what she means! **Like, blood transfusions?** [Laughs]
- A: Kinda of personal.
- Y: **Speaking of which, though, she did say she was anemic!** Such unnecessary information. [laughs]
- Y: I really want to bait her!
- A: Yes! Thank go, goodness you’re not right next to her!

Oshareism Interviews

(31) Sakurai (Guest) – Inappropriate style/register, teasing

U: *Dakara, ano, Sakurai-kun baka!*

[Laughter, applause]

S: *Baka desu yone!*

U: ***Gomen, ano, saki no misutaa paafekuto no hatsugen wo tekkai sasete itadakimasu.***

U: So, um, Sakurai you are an idiot!

(Laughter, applause)

S: I really am an idiot!

U: **Sorry, um, I'm going to have to reverse my previous statements about being Mr. Perfect.**

(32) Sakurai (Guest) – echo, teasing

S: *De, ichiban iya datta no ha, nureta Y-shaatsu ha sukaidaibingu de kawaku no ka tte iu,*

[Laughter]

U: *Hontou ni gakusha-san ga yaritakatta jikken nan desu ka?*

S: *Yaritakatta deshou ne, dou shite mo.*

U: *Jaaniizu ni kuru ka? Sou iu isou?*

S: *Mou, boku takai tokoro dame nan desu yo.*

U: *Ou ou ou.*

S: *De, hontou ni ore yabasou da tte iu hanashi ni natte maneejaa mo, “dou suru Shou-kun? Omutsu kattoku?” tte*

N: *Socchi nan da!*

I: *Soukka!*

U: *Un un un*

S: *Hontou, hito to shite mazui. Omutsu ha iranai.*

U: ***Omutsu ha ii. Chichiue no pantsu ga aru kara.***

S: ***Sou, ii saizu no ga aru kara.***

[Laughter]

S: And, the most awful part was, whether or not, through skydiving, you could, with a wet Y-shirt,
[laughter]

U: Was this really an experiment that scholars wanted to do?

S: It seems they did, no matter what.

U: That gets given to Johnny's? That kind of request?

S: Man, I am really bad with high places.

U: Right, right

S: And, when I really started saying I was in trouble, my manager said, "What do you think, Sou-kun, should I go buy you some Depends?"

N: THAT was his solution!

I: I see!

U: Right, right.

S: Really, as a human, that's just the end. I don't need Depends."

U: **No, you don't need adult diapers. After all, you've got your dad's underwear.**

S: **Right, I've got them in a great size.**
[Laughter]

(33) Sakurai (Guest) – hyperbole, self-deprecating

U: *Sakurai-kun ha Totoro no nigaoe ga sugoi umai to!*
Dakara chotto koborebanashi, sou iu, ne.

S: ***Iya ore saikin chotto e de kutteru mitai na tokoro made arimashite.***
[laughter]

U: *Sou? Dekiagari ga tanoshimi da ne, Totoro.*

S: *Dekimashita. Totoro no e desu.*

U: ***Anoo, gomen, aidoru dakedo, bun nagutte ii desu ka?***
Nanda, kono jouhou, nigaoe ga umai tte zenzen wake wakannai!

U: It says Sakurai-kun is very good at doing Doraemon's portrait.
 So that seems, something like an episode.

S: No these days **I feel like I could probly make a living off of my skills.**

[laughter]

U: Oh? I'm looking forward to this.

S: Ok, all done. A picture of Totoro.

U: **Um, yah, sorry but even though you're a teen idol, can I punch you?**
 What is with this intel? I'm not getting the whole "good at portraits" thing!

(33) Sakurai (Guest) hyperbole/rhetorical question, teasing/self-deprecation

S: *Kore ha, ano, Oono ga hatachi no toki ni kureta e nan desu kedo.*

N: *Oono-san ga kakareta e?*

S: *Hai.*

U: *Oono-kun umai yo nee!*

S: ***Iya, ore no Totoro no hou ga umai desho!***

U: ***Eto, sumimasen, Totoro tte nan desu ka?***

S: ***Henshuu saseteru kara.***

[Laughter]

S: *Aa, sou ka, sou ka, umai desu, Oono-kun ga.*

S: So this is when, um, I turned 20 and Oono gave it to me.

N: A picture that Oono-san drew?

S: Right.

U: Oono-kun's got talent!

S: **No, my Totoro is better, right?**

U: **Um, excuse me. What is this Totoro?**

S: **I'll let you keep it in a book.**
 Ah, I see, I see. He's very good, Oono-kun.

[Laughter]

- (35) Oshareism Families (Guests) Pretense/ unrealistic interpretation, teasing/self-deprecating

U: *Eigo de jiko shoukai to ka dekiru?*

S: *Hai.*

U: *Un, yoroshiku.*

S: *My name is Sofia and uh, um, I like ice skating, ballet, and um, drawing.
Um, My favorite subjects in school is um writing and drawing.*

U: *U, nanka, sugoi ne!*

[applause]

N: *Boku jittomo rikai dekinakatta n desu kedo.*

U: ***Ano, kono tabi gurami show juushou shimashita.***

U: Can you introduce yourself in English?

S: Yes.

U: Then, please.

S: My name is Sofia and uh, um, I like ice skating, ballet, and um, drawing.
Um, my favorite subjects in school is um writing and drawing.

U: Well, that's amazing!

[applause]

N: I didn't understand even a little of that.

U: **Um, I have received the Grammy Award.**

- (36) Oshareism Families (Guests) – pretense/ inappropriate style, teasing

U: ***Etto hai, onamae to nenrei ieru kana?***

[Laughter]

U: *A! Otousan da!*

Papa: *Sumimasen.*

U: *Kyou otousan mo? Waza waza.*

TB: *Hai.*

U: *A, sou desuka. yoroshiku onegaishimasu*

TB: *Nanka, kyuu ni yobaremashite. Watashi ga nani shabeteru ka wakaranai kara purodusaa-san ga “issho ni danna-san mo onegai.”*

[Laughter]

U: ***purodusaa, sore tarento to shite seiritsu shitenai.***

U: Ok, so, can you tell me your name and age?

Laughter

U: Oh! It's daddy!

Papa: Pardon me.

U: Dad's here too today? Especially.

TB: Yes.

U: A, I see. Well, welcome.

TB: Well, he was called suddenly. I wasn't sure what I should talk about today so they producer said, “Please bring your husband as well.”

Laughter

U: Producer, this doesn't do much for your talent.

(36) Oshareism Families (Guests) – rhetorical question, teasing

U: *Okaasan no gohan de nani ga suki?*

S: *Shabu shabu, suteeki, sushi, raamen, soba*

U: *Ou!*

Laughter

U: ***Sore nani, ano, mukou de narau nihongo wo itte imasuka?***

U: What is your favorite dish your mother makes?

S: Shabushabu, steak, sushi, ramen, soba...

U: Oh!

Laughter

U: **What's that, uh, using the Japanese you've been learning abroad?**

(37) Oshareism Families (Guests) – insincere praise, teasing

N: *Okosantachi ni mama no nigaoe wo chotto, kaite moratta no de,*

U: *Oo!*

N: *Sore wo shoukai shitai to omoimasu.*

Mazu desu ne.

U: *Hai.*

N: *Sofia chan ga kaite kureta mama no e.*

S: *Niko ka --*

N: *Kochira,*

S: *Niko kakimashita.*

U: *E! A, sugoi jouzu desu!*

Kore hontou ni, jibun hitori de kaita? Jouzu da ne!

T: *Mama ga geisha ni nattara na no?*

S: *Hai.*

U: *A, imeeji.*

T: *Imeeji shite kureta no?*

U: *Ooo.*

I: *Sugooi!*

T: *Nitemasu ne! (little laugh)*

U: *Niteru niteru! Hontou ni ano, Takeda-san ppoi desu ne!*

N: *Tsuzukimashite, Himari-chan ga kaite kureta mama no e desu.*

A: *Yada! Nani, kore?*

[Laughter]

A: *Nani, kore? Chotto, anta!*

U: ***Himari-chan, sokkuri ja nai no!***

[Laughter]

A: *Me ga ookiku chanto kaite aru yo!*

U: ***E jouzu da ne!***

[Laughter]

A: Chotto, obake mitai ja nai?

U: *Sonna koto nai yo ne, mama sokkuri da ne! Un. A, demo, sugoi ja nai desu ka? Mama daisuki tte kaite aru ne!*

A: *Un, nanka ne, watashi no tanjoubi no toki ni, (un) mo, “Mama otanjoubi omedetou” tte iu no wo (un) isshokenmei zutto renshuu shite (aa) sore dake wo kaite kureta mitai n d--*

U: *A, erai naa, ureshii desu ne, sore ne,*

A: *Chou ureshii, jouzu! Mama ni shika mie naku natte kita!*

[Laughter]

N: Since the kids have drawn portraits of their mothers for us,

U: Oh!

N: Let's show everyone the pictures

First,

U: Yes.

N: The picture Sofia-chan drew of her mother.

S: I did 2 –

N: Here it is.

S: I did two pictures.

U: Eh, ah, this is very good!

Did you really draw this by yourself? That's amazing!

T: Is this if I were a geisha?

S: Yes.

U: Ah, an image!

T: You imagined that for me?

U: Oooh!

I: Amazing!

T: (little laugh) It looks like me!

U: It does, it does! It really, um, has your image.

N: Next, the picture that Himari-chan drew of her mother.

A: No, what is this?

[Laughter]

A: What is that! You...

U: **Himari-chan, it's the spitting image!**

[Laughter]

A: You drew the eyes nice and large.

U: **You're very good at drawing, huh?**

[Laughter]

A: Wait a minute, doesn't it look like a monster?

U: **Not at all, mama, it looks just like you, doesn't it?** Yes. Ah, but isn't that amazing! You've written "I love you mama" on here!

A: Ah, yah, on my birthday (yes) too, it seems she practiced really hard to be able to write "Happy Birthday Mamit a" for me.

U: Oh, well done. That would make you happy, wouldn't it.

A: I was so happy! It was so good! Since then I've only been able to see myself as a mother!

(38) Nagatomo (Guest) – hyperbole, teasing

U: *Ma, ne, ano kouhai no, Yamamoto anaunsaa no sei de, mo, ikinari awei no senrei wo ukemashita ne!*

N: *Mou, taihen desu ne.*

U: ***Kore dattara oosutorariya de no shiai shita hou ga raku datta desho?***

N: ***Zenzen raku desu!***

U: *Well, ya, your underclassman, because of Yamamoto, suddenly you had a match of your life!*

N: *Man, that's tough!*

U: ***If it's this, a match with Australia would be easier, right?***

N: *A piece of cake!*

(39) Nagatomo (Guest) – rhetorical question/sarcasm, teasing

Nakamura: *E--, Yokohama F Marinosu no Nakamura () desu.*

Manager: *Nakamura senshu, genki na koe de...*

Nakamura: ***Omae nan na no?***

[Laughter]

Manager: *Ore ha zenzen ii to omottan desu kedo...*

Nakamura: *Desho?*

Manager: *Hai.*

Genki ga hoshii.

Nakamura: *Genki ha iranai n da yo!*

*Da (.) datte, betsu ni anma nanka (.) Nagatomo node are ha
detakunai to omou.*

[Laughter]

Director: *Nagatomo senshu no inshouteki na episoodo ha gozaimasuka?*

Nakamura: *Docchi ka to iu to, saisho ha ore ga kare ni kyoumi ga atte,*

Director: *A, un.*

Nakamura: *Futsuu ni shaberi tsutsu, un, iron na koto kiitan desu kedo, sono bai
ijou aitsu ga sugoi shitsumon shite kuru n de.*

[Laughter]

Uttoshikatta n desu kedo.

[Laughter]

Nakamura: *Un. Ma, koujou iyoku ga hanpa nai ssu ne. Un.*

Director: *Nagatomo senshu no, kou, naoshita hou ga ii na...*

Nakamura: *E, kare ni au tabi ni maikai ittemasu kedomo, agaru taimingu ga
hidoi (.) FW ga motta toki ni, mada kao mo agete zettai nai ko,
kocchi muiteiru taimingu nano ni (.) hitori de kankei nai hou ni
kake agachatteru (.) De, kocchi muita toki ni Nagatomo no hou wo*

*muita toki ni modotte kiteru [laughter] jibun no jinchi, jibun no ichi
ga chigau. [laughter]*

Sokora hen ga subarashii sensu dana tte omotte.

Nakamura: Eh, this is Nakamura () of the Yokohama F Marinos.

Manager: Nakamura, if you could be a little more cheerful...

Nakamura: **Who the hell are you?**

Laughter

Manager: I think it was just fine.

Nakamura: It was!

Manager: Yes, but they want some cheer.

Nakamura: I don't need any cheer! I mean, if this is Nagatomo we are talking about, the cheer is not gonna come.

Laughter

Director: Can you remember a particularly impressionable memory of Nagatomo?

Nakamura: Well I think more than anything, at first I was the one interested in him.

Director: Ah, yes.

Nakamura: After talking pretty normally, yah, I did ask a bunch of things, but that guy asked more than twice that much.

[Laughter]

It was actually pretty annoying.

Yah, but, yah, I mean his motivation to improve is impressive.

Director: Is there any sort of, areas of improvement in Nagatomo?

Nakamura: Well, I tell him this every time I meet him, but his timing (on plays) is pretty terrible. When we held the World Cup, he was just totally not looking up at all, and when we should have been running this way, he's headed off somewhere else on his own. And then, when I

was headed toward here, toward him, he was running back the wrong way [laughter]. His place, where he was was all wrong.

I thought that was some pretty amazing common sense.

Laughter

(40) Nagatomo (Guest) – hyperbole/rhetorical question, teasing

L: Ano, wakarechatta no?

N: Sou de...su.

L: Sou nan da!

N: Ma, iro iro...

U: Dare ga sonna kakushin ni serete itta!

[Laughter]

U: **Omae, asahi geinou ka?**

L: *Um, did you break up?*

N: *Ye...s, I did.*

L: *Oh, I see!*

N: *Well, this and that...*

U: *Who asks backstabbing questions like that!*

[Laughter]

U: ***What are you, part of Asahi Comedy?***

Field Notes:

(41) Watching TV together, 10/14 -- sarcasm/ pretense, mocking absent party

Akira: *A, sore minai to, ore.*

Akira: Ah, I've gotta watch that.

(42) Watching TV together, 10/21 – sarcasm/ pretense, mocking absent party

Akira: *A. kono shiidii wo kawanaito, ore.*

Akira: Ah. I've gotta buy this CD.

- (43) Class, 10/24 – inappropriate register/pretense, self-deprecating

Prof: *Minna happyou no ato, tsukaremashita ka?*

Prof: ***Watshi mo saikin isogashikute, anta tachi [laughs] anta tachi no mendou de.***

Prof: Is everyone pretty tired out after finishing their presentations?

I've also been pretty busy, with all of the [laughs] all of the stuff I have to take care of for you.

- (44) Teacher and student (10/17) Echo, teasing

Prof: *Happyou owatte nani ka tanoshii koto o shimashita ka?*

S1: ***Jinsei iroiro aru no de, kore dake janai desu.***

Prof: ***Touzan to ka?***

Prof: After you finished your presentations, did you do anything fun?

S1: **Well there's a lot of stuff going on in my life, not just this.**

Prof: **Like mountain climbing?**

- (45) Teacher and student (10/24) – pretense, teasing

Prof: *Shuumatsu ni nani ka shimashita ka?*

S1: *Boku, happyou no jyunbi wo shinagara, eiga wo mi ni ikimashita.*

Prof: ***Eiga! Zuuzuushii ne!***

Prof: Did you do anything over the weekend?

S1: While I worked on my presentation, I went to the movies.

Prof: The movies! **How sneaky!**

- (46) Teacher and student, 11/14 –ironically literal teasing/mocking

S1: *Sou desu ne. Boku mo kono eigo ga okashii na to omotta.*

Prof: ***Sou ne, hen da na to omou toki ni ha jibun de kangaeraarenakya naranai ne.***

[laughter]

S1: Yes, I also noticed that the English was strange here.

Prof: **Yes, that's right, and when you notice that something isn't right you must then consider on your own!**

- (47) Ishikawa Ryo winning first tournament in 2 years (11/ 11) – pretense, self-deprecating/mocking

Ishikawa Ryo won his first major tournament in two years

Upon making his win he was interviewed

Interviewer: *kono ninen dou deshitaka?*

Ryo: *kikanaide kudasai! [laughs]*
[crying]

Ryo: *zenzen tsurakunakatta desune.*
[laughs]

Interviewer: How have the past two years been for you?

Ryo: Please don't ask that! *[laughs]*

It was not at all difficult for me!

Ryo and the crowd laugh.